

goodfood

Middle East

Sweet or savoury?

*We like our pancakes stacked high,
maple-drizzled and chocolate-filled*



5 budget superfood swaps

Nutritious ingredients
at a fraction of the cost



Dubai's most romantic restaurants

Treat your loved
this Valentine's Day

Chocolate-filled pancakes
with caramelised banana

INSIDE

*Delicious recipes • Chef David Myers makes UAE debut • Must-visit
restaurants • Gourmet gifting • Couple-friendly resorts • Foodie travel tips*

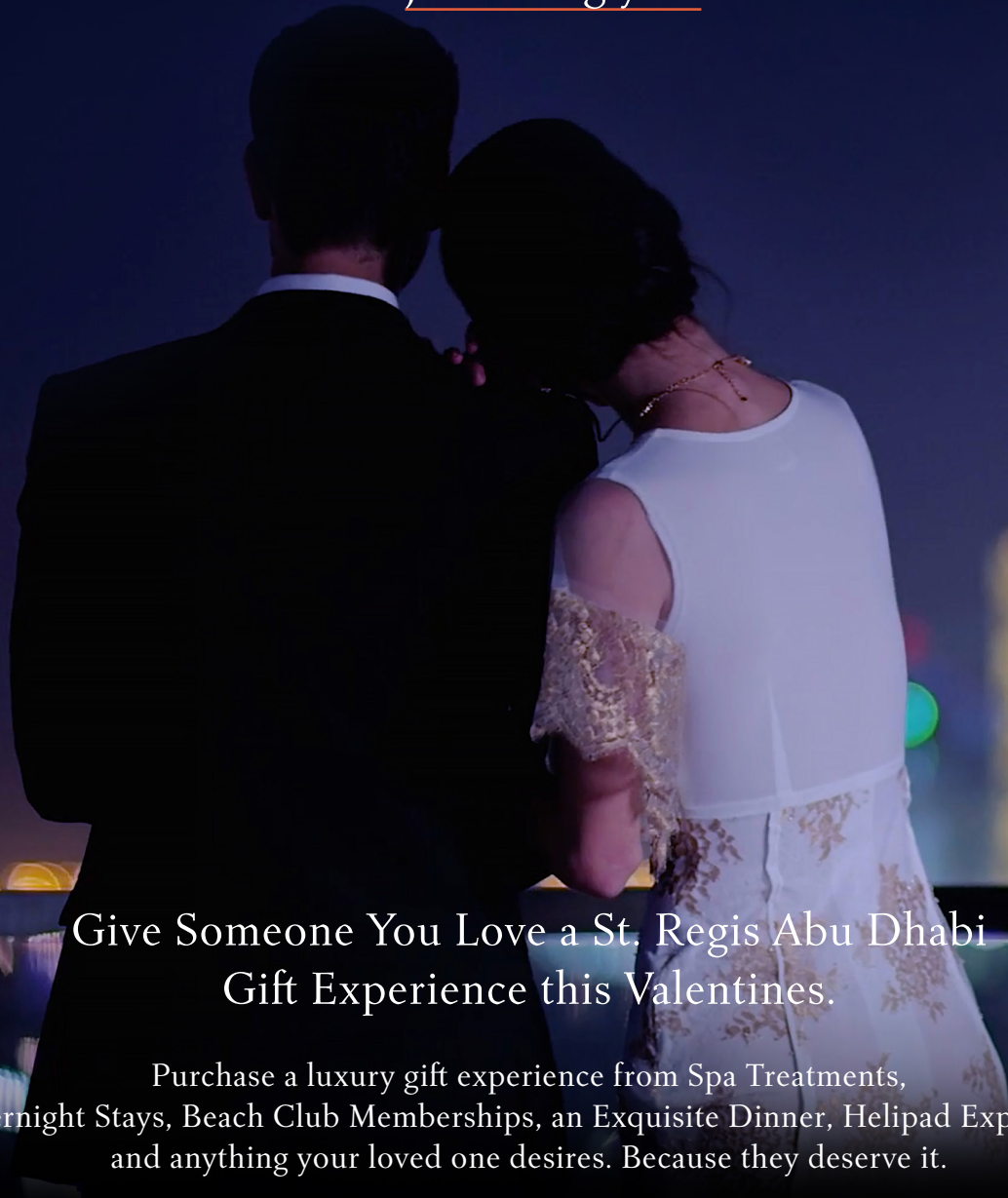
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For replacing my old socks,
For keeping your promises,
For travelling hundreds of miles, just to see me,
For always calling, when I need to talk,
For waiting for me in the cold,
For carrying our baby,
For just being you ...



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ST REGIS
ABU DHABI

Welcome to February!

After a whole month of 'New Year, new me' cut backs, we welcome February with a breath of fresh air. A new month, means new foodie celebrations to mark your calendars with – pens at the ready!

First up, prep the frying pans for Pancake Day on February 13. Turn to page 27 (*Pancake Day treats to try*) for a selection of pancake recipes offering something different from the ordinary.

On February 14, Valentine's Day comes with a range of options for those looking to celebrate. Treat your loved one to a homecooked meal with recipes from page 48 (*Recipes made with love*) and surprise them with a gourmet gift from page 21. Alternatively, dine at one of the region's most romantic restaurants (*Dinner for two, p14*), or splurge on an overnight stay at a locally-based destination offering relaxation and gourmet bliss within special packages for the occasion (*Romantic resorts, p78*).

Next up on February 16, Chinese New Year takes place with venues all over the UAE ringing in the occasion with gorgeous set-menus at great prices (*see page 13 for two of our favourites*). Or, why not try your hand at whipping up an authentic Chinese menu at home for family and friends? Head to bbcgoodfoodme.com for a great selection of recipes, including the likes of Chinese-style braised beef one-pot, lemon marmalade chicken, sticky duck, dumplings and more.

As usual, we also have plenty of recipes for everyday use, including midweek meals sure to liven up your day (*5-ingredient suppers, p37*).

Whatever your diary holds this month, cook and enjoy food with love.

Have a fabulous February,



Sophie
Editor



WHAT WE'RE LOVING!



"These protein pancakes allow you to enjoy Pancake Day without breaking the diet," says sales executive, Liz.



Sales director, Michael says: "For a dish full of flavour, try this lamb biryani at home this month!"



"This dish of mussels with chorizo, beans & cavolo nero is perfect for sharing with a loved one this Valentine's Day," says graphic designer, Froilan.



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FOUNDER CPI MEDIA GROUP
Dominic De Sousa
(1959-2015)

PRINTED BY
Emirates Printing Press LLC, Dubai

PUBLISHED BY



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A publication licensed by Dubai Production City, DCCA

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www.cpimediagroup.com

BBC Worldwide UK Publishing

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BBC Good Food ME magazine is published by CPI Media Group under licence from BBC Worldwide Limited, 101 Wood Lane, London W12 7FA.

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Our recipe descriptions

V Suitable for vegetarians.

❄️ You can freeze it.

🧊 Not suitable for freezing.

Easy Simple recipes even beginners can make.

A little effort These require a bit more skill and confidence - such as making pastry.

More of a challenge Recipes aimed at experienced cooks.

Low fat 12g or less per portion.

Low cal 500 calories or less per main.

Superhealthy Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C, or counts at least one portion of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and veg.

Good for you Low in saturated fat, low in salt.

Heart healthy Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids.

1 of 5-a-day The number of portions of fruit and/or veg contained in a serving.

Vit C | Iron | Omega-3 | Calcium | Folate | Fibre

Indicating recipes that are good sources of useful nutrients.

GLUTEN FREE Indicates a recipe is free from gluten.

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol.

These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for these symbols:

P Contains pork.

A Contains alcohol.

gf YOUR SAY

We love hearing from you!

STAR LETTER



Garlicky mushroom penne

A mouth-watering dish of delicious pasta perfect for the weekend, or as a special treat.

SERVES 2 PREP 20 mins COOK 15 mins EASY

200g penne pasta, no salt

2 red onions, halved and sliced

100g button mushrooms, sliced

200g cream cheese, softened

200g grated cheddar cheese, roughly chopped

2 tsp salt

1 tsp black pepper

1 tsp olive oil

1 tsp balsamic vinegar

1 tsp lemon juice

2 tsp fresh herbs, finely chopped

1 tsp salt

1 tsp black pepper

1 tsp olive oil

1 tsp balsamic vinegar

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1 tsp black pepper

1 tsp olive oil

1 tsp balsamic vinegar

1 tsp lemon juice

1 tsp salt

1 tsp black pepper

1 tsp olive oil

1 tsp balsamic vinegar



Linguine with avocado, tomato & lime

A refreshing dish of linguine with avocado, tomato and lime.

SERVES 2 PREP 20 mins COOK 10 mins EASY

200g linguine pasta

1 red onion, finely chopped

1 red chili, finely chopped

200g tomatoes, chopped

100g avocado, sliced

100g tomatoes, sliced

100g tomatoes, sliced

100g tomatoes, sliced

100g tomatoes, sliced

100g tomatoes, sliced

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In the January issue, I found the 'future of food' feature really interesting – learning about smart fridges, drone food deliveries and more. But, I have a

question for the other foodie readers. Guys, am I the only one that wants to say 'no' when it comes seeing technology and food together? For me, it doesn't get any better than going to the fruit and veg market and picking out fresh produce for the week, then spending a Saturday afternoon cooking up a few nice sauces, soups and dishes to enjoy throughout the week. Food and cooking for me is all about sticking to basics and tradition – and it always will be! Sorry, robot delivery man, I'll make my own food.

Polly Marrello



Since I love to cook and eat, I really enjoy BBC Good Food Middle East for exploring new food ideas and new recipes – I have been trying some of them at home! Each

month I also like reading the magazine because of the good restaurants recommendations for here in UAE. It's a big help with my work especially when we need a place for a client meeting, and we want to take them somewhere nice for coffee, lunch or dinner!

Lae Ann

Mary-Jane Botha

WIN!

The Winner of the Star letter receives a **1,000 AED shopping voucher from Tavola**, the leading retailer for your favorite brands of kitchen products, tableware and bakeware. Shop for Alessi, WMF, Staub, Zwilling Henckels, Vitamix, Wilton and much more in our stores across the GCC and online: www.tavolashop.com



TALK TO US!

Email us on feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com with your thoughts and comments, and send us your photos with your copy of BBC Good Food ME!

You can also connect with us on social media! Find us on:



Or, you could write to us at: The Editor, BBC Good Food Middle East, Grosvenor Business Tower, Barsha Heights, Office 804 PO Box 13700, Dubai, UAE.

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NEWS *nibbles*

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



Taste of Dubai returns

From March 8 – 10, Dubai Media Amphitheatre is set for a three-day food extravaganza as Taste of Dubai 2018 returns in its eleventh year. The food festival is a great opportunity to try your hand at cooking live in front of chefs, taste some of Dubai's favourite restaurants at a fraction of the price you'd spend dining in-restaurant, and also enjoy a line-up of demos by celebrity chefs and international music acts. This year's chef line-up includes the likes of Master Pâtissier Eric Lanlard, BBC's 'What to Eat Now' Valentine Warner, 2013 'Chopped' Champion Jun Tanaka, best-selling children's cookbook author Annabel Karmel, India's legendary Sanjeev Kapoor, and many more. The family-friendly event sees children under 12 years of age enter for free. Tickets are available on the door or online at tasteofdubai festival.com.



MasterChef the TV Experience restaurant to open in Dubai

The world's first 'MasterChef the TV Experience' restaurant is going to open in Dubai at Wyndham West Bay Dubai Marina Hotel, which is scheduled to open in the second half of 2018. The First Group has revealed. Based on the hugely popular MasterChef reality television series, the restaurant will introduce a world-first dining experience to Dubai that will showcase the talents and recipes of MasterChef series contestants from many of the 52 territories where the programme is produced worldwide.

Featuring an interior design concept inspired by the MasterChef TV set itself, diners will be able to choose from a dynamic menu featuring popular original dishes conceived and inspired by series contestants and champions.

THE BEST BITES



Water with added life

Spring water enriched with amino acids and natural fruit flavours, Rejuvenation Water is a new product line that we're excited about. Not only does each 100ml bottle contain just 2.25g of natural sugar and less than 63 calories, but it's also vegan friendly and caffeine-free. Award-winner of the UK-based 'Great Taste' award, Rejuvenation Water is now officially available for purchase in the UAE. Providing smart hydration when you're on the move, the water comes in flavours including the likes of ginger & lime, Spanish orange, and apple & mint. Ideal as a pick-me-up after exercise, a long day at work, or for staying hydrated during a long-haul flight, Rejuvenation Water is versatile – even during moments of relaxation, as it's free from any caffeine or stimulants. Rejuvenation Water is available from Spinneys, Al Maya, Park and Shop, All Days, and Blue Mark stores across the UAE. For more information, please visit rejuvenationwater.co.uk.

EAT FOR LESS



DUBAI RESTAURANT WEEK IS BACK

Foodies, clear your schedule from February 22 – March 3. Dubai Restaurant Week returns with 15 restaurants all offering bespoke three-course dining experiences for just Dhs199 per person during the ten-day event. It's no secret that dining out in Dubai isn't always cheap, so Dubai Restaurant Week is here to help you enjoy premium meals at lowered prices.

Restaurants taking part this year include Asado at Palace Downtown (Argentinean steakhouse), Asia Asia at Pier 7 (Asian cuisine), Bread Street Kitchen at Atlantis, The Palm (British cuisine), folly by Nick & Scott at Madinat Jumeirah (European cuisine), Jodhpur Royal Dining at Roda Al Murooj (Indian cuisine), Jean-Georges Dubai at Four Seasons Resort (French cuisine), Lima Dubai at City Walk (Peruvian cuisine), Pai Thai at Al Qasr (Thai cuisine), Rockfish at Jumeirah Al Naseem (Seafood), Scape at Burj Al Arab (Cali-fusion), Simply Italian at Club Vista Mare (Italian cuisine), The Atlantic at Souk Al Bahar (Seafood), Toro + Ko at City Walk (Spanish cuisine), Villa Beach at Jumeirah Beach Hotel (Mediterranean cuisine) and Wakame at Sofitel Dubai Downtown (Asian cuisine).

Bookings for Dubai Restaurant Week are now available online, exclusively on Roundmenu (www.roundmenu.com/dubai/restaurant-week). Each restaurant offers two dining times of 7pm and 9pm, with bookings possible for groups of two to 10 people.

INTRODUCING: The Garden

Launching on February 6, The Garden is the second part of the three-part experimental pop-up series by #DXBExperiments. One of Dubai's quirkiest outdoor pop-up bars, The Garden will be creating plant-based cocktails, garnished with the natural botanical surroundings of its temporary home at Le Royal Meridien. At The Garden, enter a lush urban oasis with trees and plants varying from a 100-year old olive tree, chilli, guava, mandarin and lemon, to fragrant herbs and foliage: introducing a unique night out with aromatic flavours and creating exciting tastes at the experimental bar. The Garden pop-up will run for three-months (February to April) and will be open three-nights a week starting with 'The Potting Shed' on a Tuesday, which will offer terracotta pots filled with bread, cheeses, pickles and bottles of cocktail for Dhs90 per pot. Wednesdays will be dedicated to pairing evenings accompanied by live music, while Thursdays will offer master classes with the bar open to the public on all-three evenings. Opening from 6pm-11pm on weekdays, and 12pm-5pm on Friday. For more details visit DXBExperiments on Facebook.





For the whole family

From February 15 – 17, talented students from the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management (EAHM) will host the second annual EAHM Food Festival. Open to the public and free to attend, the three-day event will see live cooking demonstrations and allow visitors to sample a wide-range of food types at the Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management campus opposite from Burj Al Arab. There'll also be vendors offering speciality coffees, fresh juices, burger and wrap food trucks as well as popcorn and candy stalls.

Organised by the academy's students under the supervision of their food and beverage lecturers, this is the chance to try out international cuisine, while supporting the up and coming talent. Activities on offer include live cooking demonstrations from well-known chefs in the region, themed stalls, raffles, cookery competitions and children's activities including a petting zoo, face painting, bouncy castle and games area to keep the young ones entertained. For more information, see EAHM Food Fest on Facebook and Instagram.



WORLD'S LARGEST CUP OF TEA MADE BY UAE CHEFS

Another Guinness World Record has been won for Dubai, as chefs of the Emirates Culinary Guide teamed up with Global Village and Mindset to create the world's largest cup of hot tea. The gigantic cup of Karak Chai comprised 5,000 litres, and required 400kg team powder, 270kg milk powder, 400kg sugar, 4.5kg cloves, 135kg fresh ginger, 27kg cardamom, 27kg cinnamon sticks, and 138 chefs to help make the preparations over two-days. The tea was prepared in 10 litre batches and poured into the giant cup, before Guinness arrived to check that the record of 5,000 litres at 80C was achieved. After the achievement, 45,000 visitors at Global Village consumed the tea!



For three-nights only

Renowned British 'Ready Steady Cook' chef Brian Turner is flying to Dubai to host a three-night only dinner exclusive at Capital Club in DIFC from February 7 to 9. Chef Brian, who has held a Michelin Star and been awarded a CBE, will be serving up a six-course tasting menu of modern British dishes including beetroot & citrus marinated salmon with an apple & radish salad, roast lamb canon & best end with a tarragon crust with celeriac fondant & rosemary gratin, Yorkshire blue rarebit and white chocolate & raspberry trifle. A five-course grape flight is also available to compliment the menu. The dinner will take place from 7.30pm for the three-days and is priced at Dhs650 for six-courses, while the grape pairing is priced at Dhs350. Call 04-3640111 or e-mail RSVP@capitalclubdubai.com.



 @izakayawasabigirl

Teishoku Night

A traditional meal where all courses are served together as a set. At **AED 175 per person**, enjoy the Teishoku set menu with free flowing house beverages. You could also sip on premium Belaire Rare bubbly with the set menu for **AED 298 per person**.

Wednesdays, 6pm to midnight

Tanjoubi Special

Gather for celebrations in true Japanese style in a private Tatami room with a special sushi menu and a selection of beverages. Advance booking required.

AED 1800 for six people for two hours including soft beverages

AED 2200 for six people for two hours including house beverages

Tokyo Night

In honour of "Omakase", a Japanese tradition of letting a Chef choose your order, immerse yourself in a vibrant Japanese setting and allow the culinary team to dexterously craft your dining experience.

AED 300 per person for the Omakase-Regular Menu

AED 450 per person for the Omakase-Premium Menu

Every Monday from 6pm to midnight

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Starting from 2nd February, every Friday from 1PM until 4PM

AED 299 for Ladies inclusive free flow Bubbly

AED 399 for Gentlemen inclusive free flow of Russian beverages

For bookings contact 04 520 0000 or
reservation.premiumdubai@rixos.com

Farm to fork transparency

It's now possible to track your food back to its origins at Spinneys supermarkets, thanks to a revolutionary labelling system introduced last month in partnership with GLOBALG.A.P – representing a first in the Middle East. Matthew Frost, CEO of Spinneys tells us how the farm to fork system works. **By Sophie McCarrick**



Have you ever wondered where your fruit and veg comes from? Not just the country of origin – but where it *really* comes from.

Shoppers at Spinneys will now be able to trace a select range of fresh produce back to the farm where it was grown and the very farmer who produced it.

Last month, Spinneys revealed its partnership with agricultural assurance organisation GLOBALG.A.P to introduce a revolutionary new labelling system. The new tracking system allows customers to watch videos of the growing process of their chosen produce and discover information about the people who harvested it.

The trial, which will initially be on a selected number of stone fruits, such as peaches, plums and apricots, will see a special Global GAP Number (GGN) label added to applicable products showing the origins of the food, giving total farm to fork transparency.

Matthew Frost, CEO of Spinneys tells more...

Why do you think there is more demand from customers for traceability these days?

Whilst Spinneys has a talented team of buyers who regularly meet farmers all over the world to learn about their growing practices and ensure that the food we're putting on shelves is top quality, we do know our customers want greater visibility of where their food comes from.

To this point, Spinneys customers have not had a connection with the farmer who has grown their food and with this new partnership with GLOBALG.A.P. has enabled us to build the bridge between supplier and our customers – in an easy, interactive and informative way.



How is a product traced back to its origin? Tell us about how the system works...

The trial will see a special GLOBALG.A.P Number (GGN) label added to applicable products showing the origins of the food, giving total farm to fork transparency. Shoppers simply need to visit the GLOBALG.A.P microsite link shown on the GGN product label (www.ggn.org/spinneys) to discover information about the farmer that has grown that particular food, or watch videos on the growing process, giving them a unique insight into how the food they are buying, and subsequently feeding to their families, has come to be on the shelf at Spinneys.

GLOBALG.A.P works with 157 independent and accredited certification bodies to carry out GLOBALG.A.P Certification worldwide. These certification bodies conduct both announced and unannounced onsite farm inspections and audits throughout the year.

After the trial period with Spinneys, what other ingredients will the labelling system be rolled out on, and when?

GLOBALG.A.P has already rolled out a labelling system for seafood from aquaculture and currently expanding into flowers and ornamental plants.

We hope to roll out the GLOBALG.A.P number across all of our GLOBALG.A.P fruit and vegetables in store. We have full traceability for all of our meat from farm to fork and have recently introduced clean deck labelling to our bakery – ensuring customers have full traceability of ingredients and no nasties.

What type of criteria does Global G.A.P look at when verifying an ingredient's quality?

GLOBALG.A.P is a “process certification”, it is the practice on the farm and the traceability that is certified, not the quality of the product itself.

Why did Global G.A.P choose Spinneys to partner with?

Spinneys is proudly the first GLOBALG.A.P retail member in the Middle East, signing up to the assurance programme in 2015 with a commitment to ensure sustainable sourcing practices across its stores.

Spinneys is uniquely positioned in the UAE, in a separate market, and is a high-quality player, which provides a perfect test market for GLOBALG.A.P.

Will GLOBALG.A.P partner with any other supermarkets in the future, or will the labelling system be exclusive to Spinneys?

The trial initiative was a global exclusive for Spinneys and we will continue our fruitful partnerships.

For more information, please visit product2farm.org or spinneys-dubai.com

Flavours of the *month*

Here is what's hot and happening
around town this month.

New on the block

► Ninive, Jumeirah Emirates Towers

A dining destination inspired by the diversity and heritage of the Arab world has opened at Dubai's Jumeirah Emirates Towers hotel. Tucked away on an elevated terrace at Jumeirah Emirates Towers, the venue combines elements of a garden and a contemporary urban majlis. Ninive's menu is drawn from across the Middle East and North Africa, with Iraqi Egyptian and even Khaleeji elements. There is sautéed lamb marinated in spices and served in a casserole – each vegetable is cooked separately to preserve its distinct aroma and texture. Chicken comes stuffed with saffron rice, raisins and pine nuts; there is also the Tashreeb, an Iraqi dish, braised lamb in breadcrumbs cooked for seven hours in spices and lemon. Call 04-3266105 or see ninive.ae.

► MINA Brasserie, Four Seasons Hotel DIFC

This month MINA Brasserie, a new modern, lively brasserie for lunch and dinner, in partnership with award-winning American chef Michael Mina, will launch at Four Seasons Hotel DIFC. The menu will feature a variety of hearty Brasserie style dishes by chef Michael and his team of talented chefs. Ingredients will be carefully sourced for seasonal seafood, meat and fish complemented by a decadent selection of desserts. Highlights will include: za'atar salmon and caviar with shallot potato cake, pickled onion and cucumber yogurt; Michael Mina's tuna tartare with pine nuts, garlic, mint and sesame-habanero oil; beets and burrata with toasted pistachio, quinoa pilaf and buckwheat crouton; phyllo-crusted Dover sole with brown butter-caper sauce; and wood-fired lamb chops. Call 04-5060000.

► The Fish House, InterContinental Dubai Festival City

Inspired by local heritage and the simplicity of diligently sourcing the freshest produce, The Fish House will open this month. The Fish House is built on a simple premise of promising the freshest range of fish combined with the appreciation of individual preference and palette. "The centerpiece of The Fish House experience is our signature raw bar which houses a charcoal and wood grill, allowing the team to prepare your meal right at the heart of the venue," said Ben Nicholas, GM, The Fish House. Call 04-7011127 or e-mail thefishhousedubai@ihg.com.

► Kishmish, Dar Al Wasl Mall, Jumeirah

Dubai's first gourmet Afghan street and soul food restaurant will open doors this month. The authentic Afghan eatery tells the tale of three patriotic Afghan women with a shared love for food, nostalgia for home, and a mutual dream: to share the riches and comforts of Afghan food with the world. Aiming to revive the identity of Afghanistan, Kishmish provides the same tastes and experiences. Capturing the complexity of aromas and tastes to represent a unique fusion of South, West and Central Asian cuisines. Call 04-3496665 or see kishmish.ae.

Ninive, Jumeirah Emirates Towers

Text by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs SUPPLIED

Scalini, Four Seasons Resort, Jumeirah

Scalini, the much-anticipated Italian restaurant and bar from London opened doors at Four Seasons Jumeirah last month. Bringing a quintessential yet traditional Italian experience to the UAE food scene, Scalini invites guests to enjoy authentic food with a unique twist. Inspired by a love for Italy's coastal cuisine, award-winning Chef Monserrato Marini's bespoke menu honours the traditions of classic Italian cooking and culture, while infusing them with an upscale, urban taste. Signature dishes include the likes of spaghetti lobster, grilled langoustines, veal Milanese, risotto di mare and tiramisu. Call 04-3490068 or e-mail reservations@scalini-dubai.com.



Crazy Pizza, Billionaire Mansion terrace, Business Bay



If you're a fan of a laid-back vibe with delicious food in a beautiful setting, this one's for you! Set on the terrace of Billionaire Manion, at the newly opened

restaurant Crazy Pizza. Every Friday evening, 'Crazy Drunch' offers a large menu, with live music from resident DJs and unlimited delicious drinks, for Dhs450 (selection of menu options and unlimited drinks), or Dhs650 (selection of menu options, unlimited drinks and champagne). For the ladies, the Billion*Her ladies night starts from 10.30pm, where free flowing drinks will ensure you stay all night long. Dishes on the menu include; Burrata with cherry tomatoes, wagyu gyoza, a selection of pizzas, Alaskan black cod and Billionaire's sushi selection, as well as delicious desserts. The evening brunch takes place every Friday from 7pm till 12am. Call 04-5103100 or e-mail reservations@billionairemansiondubai.com.



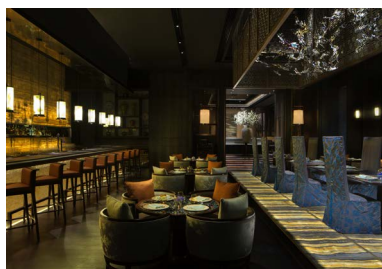
BHAR, Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai



Dialing up the party feels at the all-new +961 Brunch at BHAR Modern Middle Eastern Brasserie, expect Beirut party vibes and expertly prepared regional culinary favourites by chef Mohanad

Alshamali. With features including marinated poussin, Turkish beef tartare and sweet milk bastille, every bite will be the perfect pair to his restaurant's boozy beverages. Find yourself sipping on a selection of heritage drinks while local DJ Karrouhat takes to the decks to heat up the vibes with his own eclectic sounds. Experience the newest brunch in town, amongst vibrant Arabic surroundings and stunning starlit canal views. Starting February 2 from 7.30pm to 11pm, the brunch is priced at Dhs350 with house beverages, Dhs250 with soft beverages. Call 04-5125511 or visit bhar-dubai.com.

YUAN, Atlantis, The Palm



Celebrate Chinese New Year at one of Dubai's most authentic Chinese restaurants, YUAN. From February 15 to 24, YUAN's team of expert chefs have crafted a special a la carte menu for dinner, giving diners the chance to sample an array of Chinese favourites including the like of "Yu Sheng" salmon salad served

with snow pea or stir-fried lobster seasoned with ginger and spring onion. On Friday 16 and Friday 23 February, YUAN's renowned Yum Cha brunch will ramp up activity in celebration of Chinese New Year, serving an exotic array of dim sum, Chinese favourites and fragrant eclectic cocktails from 12pm to 3.30pm. The brunch starts at Dhs198 per person with non-alcoholic beverages, Dhs408 per person with alcoholic beverages and Dhs108 for children 4-11 years' old. Call 04-4261000, or visit atlantisthepalm.com.



Hakkasan, Dubai & Abu Dhabi



In celebration of Chinese New Year 2018, Hakkasan, the brand known for its modern interpretation of authentic Cantonese cuisine, will usher in the Chinese New Year with festive celebrations commemorating 2018 as The Year of the Dog. Upholding the brand's proud Chinese heritage, Hakkasan will

welcome the new lunar year with a limited-edition signature menu created by Hakkasan chefs from London, USA, the Middle East and Asia, which will be available at Hakkasan Dubai and Hakkasan Abu Dhabi from January 29 to March 4, 2018. Priced at Dhs598 per person, guests opting for the menu will enjoy dishes including the likes of Szechuan wind dried oyster with lotus root with crispy rice in man tou, braised beef and caramelised walnut with asparagus and mint, grilled Chilean sea bass with kumquat glaze, wok-fry native lobster in superior stock with edamame and caviar, lamb in seaweed soy with celery and enoki mushroom, plus Abalone fried rice in bean curd wrap with mushroom which contains fai cai (fat choy), an ingredient which in Chinese means to 'get rich and grow wealth'. Hakkasan Dubai - call 04-3848484. Hakkasan Abu Dhabi call - 02-6907739 and Dhs445 with bubbles. Call 052-7779472 or e-mail info@azure-beach.com.

DINNER FOR TWO

Celebrate the day of love at one of these romantic restaurants, serving special menus for Valentine's Day on February 14



Royal Beach, Atlantis, the Palm

For those seeking a Valentine's Day to remember, couples can book a candle lit cabana and dine under the stars on Atlantis, The Palm's Royal Beach, offering uninterrupted views of the iconic Palm Island. Guests will be treated with canapés upon arrival before embarking on a sumptuous seven-course set menu complemented by bubbles, and a violinist harmoniously playing in the background, the perfect evening is complete with a little romantic stargazing. A vegetarian menu is also available, if required. Priced at Dhs3,650 per couple for canapés, seven-course menu, beverages, private cabana and live violinist, from 7.30 – 10.30pm. Call 04-4261000, or visit atlantisthepalm.com.

LookUP, La Ville Hotel & Suites



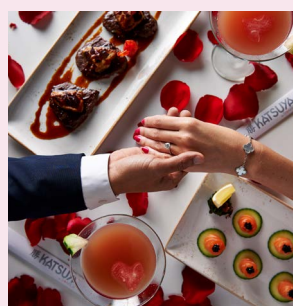
Dine under the stars this Valentine's and be one of just a handful of couples to enjoy a magical evening at La Ville Hotel & Suites' rooftop terrace LookUp. Guests are invited to enjoy an intimate dinner and soak in the romantic, candle-lit atmosphere, complete with unrivalled views of the glistening Dubai skyline and the stars above. Taking place on February 14 from 7.30 – 10.30pm, the evening is priced at Dhs1,400 per couple including a 4-course dinner for two with grape pairing, or Dhs1,100 per couple, including a 4-course dinner for two with soft beverages. Bookings to be made three days in advance. Call 054-3095948 or e-mail laville.dining@autographhotels.com.

Level 42, Shangri-La Hotel, Dubai

Impress your other half with the jaw-dropped city views this Valentine's Day. Set on the picturesque terrace on level 42 of the hotel, is where you and your loved one can enjoy a refined five-course menu while admiring the Burj Khalifa and landscapes of Downtown Dubai. Toast with bubbly as the live harpist plays in the background, setting the most romantic of scenes. Taking place on February 14 from 7pm to 12am, the experience is priced at Dhs4,500 per couple. Call 04-4052703 or f&breservations.sldb@shangri-la.com.

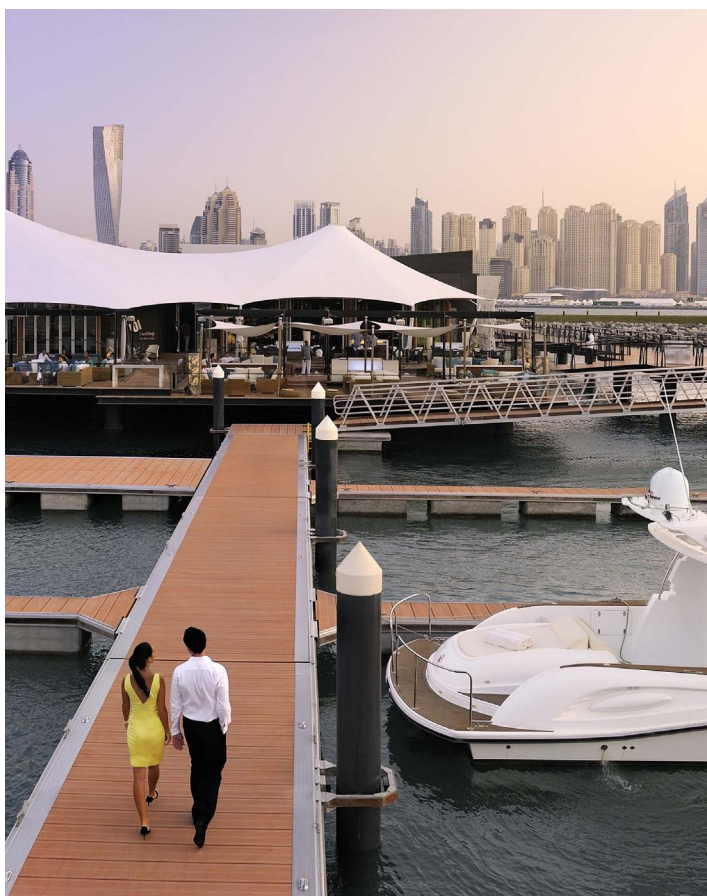


Katsuya by Starck, Jumeirah Al Naseem Hotel



Celebrate the day of love with an authentic Japanese experience. To welcome the evening, enjoy chef's special amuse-bouche paired with a complimentary glass of bubbly or signature Katsuya Elixir, served with a scoop of love in the form of heart

shaped strawberries. Choose your favourite appetisers and mains from a carefully curated Valentine's Day set menu, comprising of Katsuya signatures and heart-shaped sushi rolls. As no date night is complete without a sinful dessert, the Katsuya team have put together a special limited-edition surprise that is sure to tickle your senses. Priced at Dhs550 for two, from 12pm to 1am, for lunch or dinner on February 14. Call 04-4190676 or katsuyareservations-uae@diversedining.co.uk.



101 Dining Lounge and Marina, One&Only The Palm, Dubai

Located overlooking One&Only The Palm's private marina, 101 Dining Lounge and Marina boasts sweeping panoramic views of the Dubai skyline. The exclusive, intimate venue offers gorgeous al fresco seating, which looks out onto tranquil waters and the resort's private beachfront – the perfect venue to share a special evening for Valentine's Day. Serving up a refined selection of Mediterranean-inspired cuisine, the offering here ranges from set menus to tapas and a la carte.

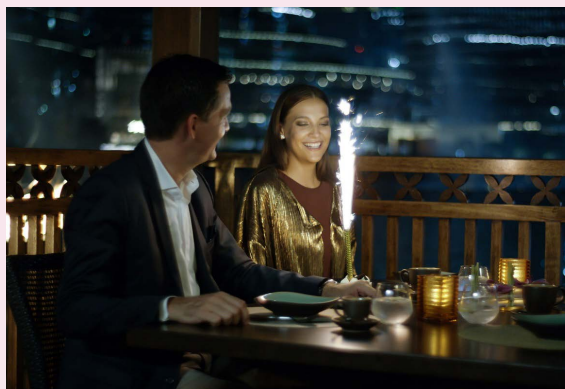
On February 14, treat your loved one to a dining experience that begins with chef's amuse bouche, followed by egg parfait with cauliflower emulsion and Oscietre caviar. A second starter course of king crab with sliced fennel, asparagus and citrus mayonnaise comes next. For mains, choose between a course of pan-fried red mullet with potato and tapenade mille feuille served with pomegranate sauce vierge, or alternatively, Tournedos Rossini (filet mignon, topped with foie gras) served with celeriac mousseline, baby carrot, radish and black truffle veal jus. To finish, 101's pastry chef will serve a selection of hand-picked treats. Priced at Dhs480 per person for a 5-course menu without beverages, or Dhs590 per person for 5-courses and a glass of Champagne.

BBC Good Food ME recommends arriving just before sunset. The views at this ultra-chic venue are rather spectacular for sundowners! For the bubble lovers – there's also a dedicated Champagne bar. If you can't make it for Valentine's, visit on a Friday when the venue offers live music from sunset, through the evening. Call 04-4401030 or e-mail restaurants@oneandonlythepalm.com.

Helipad, St. Regis Abu Dhabi



If you're looking to try something unique this Valentine's Day, this event is not for the faint-hearted. At St. Regis Abu Dhabi, ten couples will be able to experience a very unique Helipad Sunset Supper, 255 meters in the air. With ambiance created by the sounds of live saxophone, free flowing Champagne, canapés and stunning views view from the highest active helipad in Middle East – the perfect way to create a truly unforgettable Valentine's. Taking place on February 14 for 90 minutes during sunset, the experience is priced at Dhs1,300 per couple with canapés and soft drinks, or Dhs1,700 per couple with canapés and Champagne. Call +97126944553 or e-mail restaurants.abudhabi@stregis.com.



Thiptara, Palace Downtown

Show that person in your life just how special they are with an evening of passion at Thiptara, awarded the most romantic restaurant at the BBC Good Food Middle East Awards 2016. Indulge in a five-course set menu with a love inspired table centerpiece arrangement. Thiptara, which means 'Magic at the Water', is surrounded by Burj Lake, where the spectacular views of The Dubai Fountain transform this al fresco waterfront restaurant into a truly magical setting for Valentine's Day. All guests will receive a special complimentary jar of Valentine's sweets. The experience takes place on February 14, from 6 – 11.30pm, and is priced at Dhs800 per couple, inclusive of a five-course set menu, soft and house beverages, or Dhs1,370 per couple, inclusive of a five-course set menu and a bottle of premium bubbly.

J&G Steakhouse, St. Regis Dubai



Enjoy an intimate dinner for two this Valentine's Day at J&G Steakhouse, where a five-course menu has been prepared. Start off with baked oyster accompanied with bacon, leeks and Hollandaise, before moving onto foie gras terrine, then a palate cleanser of Prosecco sorbet flavoured with crispy apple and yuzu ponzu foam. For main, delight in braised oyster blade beef with

truffle potato dauphinoise, wild mushroom confit and jus. End on a sweet note with strawberry vanilla vacherin. Priced at Dhs495 for food only per person, or Dhs695 per person inclusive of house beverages and flowers. Call 04-4355555.



Seagrill Restaurant and Lounge, Fairmont The Palm

Think twinkly lights, dim lit lighting and a fresh, flavoursome Mediterranean set menu for Valentine's Day this year. Savour a four-course set menu, starting with salmon and caviar, moving on to pan-seared scallops, sea bass or beef tenderloin, before finishing with an ultra-rich red velvet cheesecake with fruit jelly to share. To complete the evening, a rose and polaroid picture moment will be provided by the hotel. Available February 14 and 15, from 7pm – 11.30pm from Dhs699 per couple. Call 04-4573457 or e-mail palm.dinning@fairmont.com.



Weslodge Saloon, JW Marriott Marquis Hotel Dubai

Weslodge Saloon is hosting a St. Valentine's celebration with a one-off evening brunch. The buzzing North American venue is open to hosting groups and couples with an after dark brunch service inclusive of Weslodge signature dishes, live entertainment, brunch style drinks packages and some of the most romantic views of the city. Once dinner is completed a luxurious cheese board will be served to the table along with your choice of board game. Taking place on February 14 from 7.30pm to 10.30pm, the Valentine's brunch is priced at Dhs375 with soft drinks, Dhs475 with house beverages and Dhs575 with sparkling. Call 04-5601700 or visit weslodge.ae.



La Petite Maison, Dubai and Abu Dhabi

La Petite Maison's cuisine is made for sharing and features Valentine's appropriate dishes including the likes of snails with garlic butter, caviar, lobster and oysters. There are plenty of salads and hot plates – including French beans with foie gras, salad of green lentils, warm prawns, pan fried dover sole with mustard dressing, dry-aged grilled Black Angus rib eye steak and salt baked seabass. No romantic dinner is complete without dessert. Indulge in an array of delicious sweets, including warm chocolate mousse with malt ice cream. Located in DIFC, Dubai and now also in Abu Dhabi at The Galleria, Al Maryah Island. Call 04-4390505 (Dubai), 02-6929600 (Abu Dhabi).

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AL ZORAH

UAE



Tried & tasted

Each month, we review three of the city's top tables.



Rüya Dubai, Grosvenor House, Dubai Marina



Reviewed by Sophie McCarrick
Editor of BBC Good Food Middle East,
lover of all things food and a keen
seeker of new dining experiences.



Where?

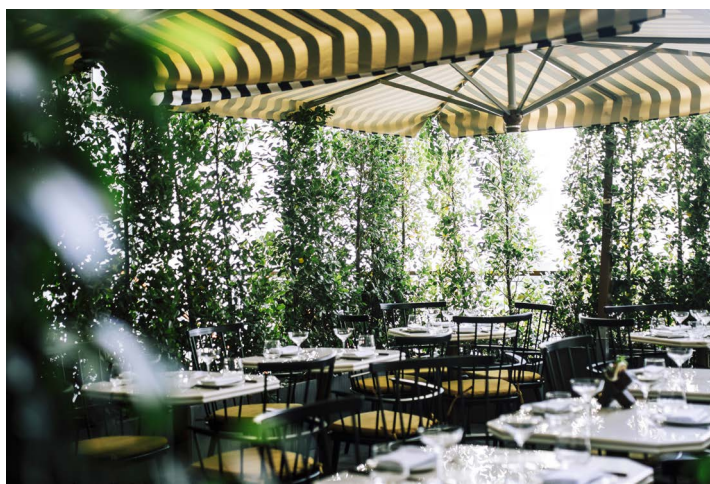
BB SOCIAL DINING, DIFC

Dining experience: Dinner

What's it like? In a city that sees restaurant openings every two-minutes, it can be a struggle to stand out from the crowd – but not for BB. This brand new social eatery and bar recently opened doors with a bold, quirky and unforgettable personality – the type you can't help but want to get to know.

BB is the baby of a founding team backed by more than six decades of hospitality expertise, with chef Alex Stumpf at the kitchen's helm (most recently of Peyote), and his wife/restauranteur Shabnum Stumpf and Spero Panagakakis (both formerly of Zuma) overseeing everything outside of the kitchen.

From the moment of entering BB, I'm hit with a wave of infectious charm and character. Housed in a space previously occupied by an art gallery, BB is set across three floors (although it feels like



there's more), which sprawl both indoor and outdoor. Think spiraling staircase, nooks and crannies, cosy booths, a cool counter overlooking the kitchen, terracotta pots filled with abundant greenery, and mustard coloured upholstery paired with black and white stripes.

What are the food highlights?

BB's menu draws inspiration from the east and is split into five 'B' sections: Baos, Bites, Bowls, BBQ and Bubbles. In line with its 'social dining' identity, all dishes on the menu are designed with sharing in mind, using only the freshest of ingredients – all at accessible prices.

Our experience began with little bites of cauliflower popcorn, a gorgeous green hummous that combines edamame, tahini and spinach, and one of my favourite dishes of the night, crispy Brussel sprouts, which were absolutely divine and incredibly moorish. I'm not one for choosing vegetarian dishes when dining out, but the veggie-based dishes here really hold their own against the meat and fish dishes.

My next favourite dish was also vegetarian and came next in the form of a bao stuffed with braised jackfruit – pure magic and offering so much flavour – reminding me slightly of an onion bhaji. I never would have guessed that it was

jackfruit, with its stunning savoury flavour. The soft-shell crab bao was equally delicious, and comes served with its claws playfully peeking out of the bun.

For an interactive experience, I'd highly

recommend the DIY Shabu Shabu. With a hot-pot set upon your table, the dish is served with a selection of cooking vegetables like mushrooms, heirloom baby carrots, baby corn, pak choy in a hot soy broth, plus a platter of dolma, raw wagyu beef, lobster and prawn with tweezers for you to cook to your preference in the pot. From the main bites, the slow-cooked Iberico lamb skewers were incredibly succulent and tasty, served with pickled cucumber ribbons.

For dessert, the 'baonut' is a must - bao meets doughnut, served with the most delicious strawberry jam and cream.

How was the service? Service and hospitality here is warm and welcoming. You're made to feel at home and like an old friend of the team. Our server, Kingley, knew the menu inside out, offered service with a smile and was always on hand to assist without being intrusive.

The bottom line: Despite BB only opening recently, I feel like it's been here for years. It boasts an unbelievable amount of character, and is most definitely something totally unique on Dubai's food scene. It was refreshing to see so much well-executed creativity behind a concept, and a menu offering something from the norm.

Want to go? Around Dhs180 per person for a great selection of dishes. Call 04-407444 or e-mail hello@thisisbb.com.



Where?
RÜYA DUBAI, GROSVENOR HOUSE, DUBAI MARINA

Dining experience: Friday brunch, “The Grand Bazaar”

What’s it like? Serving up beautiful Anatolian classics with a contemporary twist, Rüya is truly a gem of a restaurant with bar and gorgeous wrap-around, al fresco terrace on the waterfront of Dubai Marina. Rüya means ‘dream’ in Turkish, and really lives up to its name with a rather enchanting atmosphere and culinary offering. It’s so good that the venue is soon due to open its second location in London!

It’s chic yet rustic interiors boast character and whisk you away to a scene overlooking the Bosphorus – down to the plates and cups, there’s a lot of Turkish charm here. Led by executive chef Colin Clague, who has built up an impressive culinary reputation for his leading roles at Jean-Georges, Zuma, and Qbara (and many others), the kitchen does not disappoint.

Brunch here is upbeat with the

resident Dj playing Anatolian House beats all afternoon – it’s the type of place you can spend all day and stick around into the evening for sundowners, and quite possibly a dance.

What are the food highlights? The newly refreshed brunch at Rüya sees the offering turn completely to an a la carte option (previous, the brunch had been a mix of buffet and a la carte), allowing you and your table to sit back and relax as everything is brought to you. With the exception of two interactive stations, including an Anatolian Bloody Mary station, plus a traditional Turkish pide station, where you can assemble your own creation of this signature dish.

The brunch journey begins with pass around dishes including the likes of crispy fried whitebait with chilli, lime and almond tarator, the most delicious Turkish spicy chicken wings, juicy iskender kebab with tomato sauce and yogurt, dreamy two-cheese pide with slow cooked egg and melted butter on top, feta borek with zucchini and walnut, and several other options.

For mains, you’re able to pick a course to enjoy by yourself, with the exception of one dish that comes for two, like we did. The sharing dish of whole grilled

seabream with a spiced herb rub, was extremely flavoursome, while the fish was cooked beautifully. Other options include dishes like grilled lamb culetts with smoked eggplant and tomato, and rib-eye steak with Turkish coffee and izot rub and crispy zaatar potatoes.

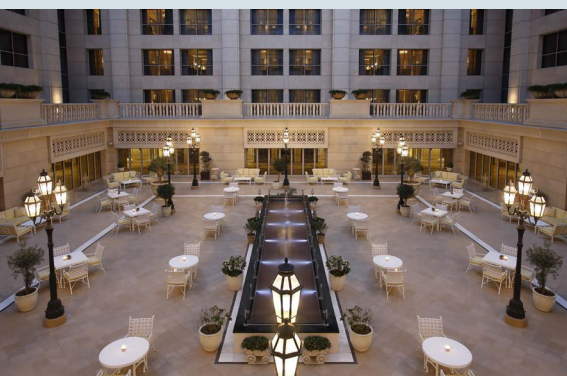
If you have room, the desserts are definitely a credit to Turkey’s traditional sweets.

How was the service? Service is attentive. Sharing dishes were brought over to the table regularly and our drinks never fell dry.

The bottom line: This gorgeous venue is one I can’t get enough of. It offers high quality food and warm hospitality in a casual and relaxed atmosphere. A great location for unwinding with your other half or a small group of friends.

Stick around after brunch for selected beverages priced at Dhs25 from 3pm to 6pm – it’s the perfect place to enjoy sundowners on the terrace, and dance into the evening as the sun goes down over Dubai Marina.

Want to go? Brunch takes place from 12pm – 4pm every Friday and is priced at Dhs299 for food and soft drinks, Dhs399 with house beverages, signature cocktails and bubbly, and Dhs499 with French bubbly. Call 04-3999123 or e-mail info@ruyadubai.com.



Where?
LE PATIO, ST. REGIS DUBAI

Dining experience: Dinner

What’s it like? Le Patio is a beautiful al fresco oasis hidden from the hustle and bustle of Sheikh Zayed Road at St. Regis Dubai. It’s a chic, open air venue within the central courtyard of the hotel, ideal for relaxing with family and friends over dinner or for a couple of drinks with shisha – especially during the beautiful cooler months. With a calming water feature running down the middle of the restaurant, Le Patio is an idyllic retreat serving traditional contemporary Arabic cuisine influenced by international flavours.

What are the food highlights? Choose from freshly baked breads with a variety of

authentic dips, or a selection of mixed grills from the barbeque. Light bites that are idea to share at the start include items like the restaurant’s signature ‘mezze tree’, which comes playfully served with hummous, mutable and babaganoush cones. There’s also cold and hot mezze platters, including Arabic plates like fattoush, tabbouleh, vine leaves, lamb kibbeh, and meat or cheese sambusek.

Next, opt for starter dishes like watermelon & zaatar feta cheese salad served with hummous quinoa, or the warming harrira soup with green lentils, chickpeas and succulent lamb cubes. There’s also a fantastic selection of Turkish pide, which is great served to share, as a side dish or as a smaller bite, with toppings including halloumi cheese, vegetables, chicken or lamb.

For bigger bites and main courses, opt for delicious grilled dishes like Arabic mixed grill, grilled seabass, shish taouk, or crusted dukkha lamb rack with zaatar mashed potato, or alternatively traditional chicken tagine with couscous. Traditional Arabic favourites such as lamb kofta wrap and chicken shawarma are also available here. Finish up on a sweet note and delight in a popular regional dessert called umm Ali, which comes served with puff pastry, milk

and cream with pistachios and raisins. Another scrumptious option is the selection of baklava or Turkish kunafa with cheese.

In terms of beverages, for something refreshing opt for an expertly blended iced mocktail, or a delectable tea infused with natural fruit nectars and fresh berries – perfect for enjoying during the winter nights, or refreshing with during the summer. A wide variety of shisha flavours are also on offer, using the best quality tobacco, including its very own signature ‘Le Patio Blend’.

The bottom line: The ideal venue to head to when you’re looking to share a relaxed, social evening with family and friends under the beautiful night’s sky.

Want to go? Priced around Dhs300 for three-courses, excluding beverages. Call 04-4355577.





Nestled in the heart of the Palm Jumeirah, Senara is a friendly and relaxed British Bar and Restaurant on the water's edge, boasting some of the best views in town.

Senara offers great food made from locally sourced produce, an expansive drinks menu and daily sundowner happy hours.

With an open outdoor terrace, guests can enjoy unobstructed marina views and indulge in the unbeatable tastes of Great British classics.

Senara's Posh Fish and Chips, homemade Scotch Eggs and the Saturday all day British Roast are must-trys.



OUTDOOR TERRACE



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The Palm Jumeirah, Dubai
Reservations 04 451 6460
www.senararestaurants.com



[senara.dxb](https://www.facebook.com/senara.dxb)



COFFEE MACHINE

Give a gift that keeps on giving this Valentine's Day, with Nespresso's Expert&milk machine. The Expert&milk has a fully integrated milk frother to indulge milk lovers with a wide variety of recipes. Both models come in two colours, 'Off Black' and 'Anthracite Grey'. Priced at Dh\$1,425, available at Nespresso stores across the UAE.



PERSONALISED CHEESEBOARD

A little cheesy and guaranteed to win a smile. Gift your companion The Joinery Shop's engraved cheeseboard and let them know that you think they're 'grate'. Can be personalised with the name of the receiver and that of the giver. Priced from Dh\$119, items are available to order online at thejoineryshop.ae.



CHOCOLATE HEART

Marks & Spencer have a range of Valentine's treats this month, ranging from items like this milk chocolate heart priced at Dh\$28, to rose shaped jellies. Perfect for those with a sweet tooth! Available from Marks & Spencer stores across the UAE.



INSULATED WATER BOTTLE

Not only is the S'well bottle stylish and comes in a wide range of colours, it's also stainless-steel vacuum insulated, meaning that your drinks stay cold up to 24 hours, and hot for 12 hours. This hydration accessory is triple-walled, so that it won't sweat on your hands or in your bag, plus it's eco-friendly - #saynotoplastic. Priced at Dh\$130 for a medium sized bottle from swellbottle.com

Valentine's Day gifts

Gourmet goodies to treat your loved ones with this Valentine's Day, all available in the UAE



SWEET TREATS

Surprise your loved one at work or at home this Valentine's Day with some sweet treats from EAT Artisanal Bakery in JLT. From rose shaped frosted cupcakes (Dh\$15 each) to strawberry-filled heart-shaped cookies (Dh\$30 for box of 6), and chocolate covered strawberries, plus more - there's lots to choose from. Available from EAT Bakery or delivery by called 800-EATBAKE.



A BAKER'S DREAM MACHINE

KitchenAid's iconic Artisan Stand Mixer in 'silky pink' is perfect for those who love to bake. It features a tilting head for easy access, 10 speed settings for everything from ultra-fast whipping to slow mixing, and versatile accessories that handle everything from mixing heavy cake batters, kneading dough to whipping light and fluffy egg whites. Priced at Dh\$3,148 from Tavola stores across the UAE.



GOURMET POPCORN

Snuggle up on the sofa with your other half and a tin of gourmet popcorn from Garrett Popcorn Shops. Just for Valentine's the store has introduced a new and indulgent chocolate flavour popcorn called Cocoa CaramelCrisp, covered in fine Belgian Milk Chocolate for the special occasion. Available in store and through Deliveroo. Prices start from Dh\$32.



Tales of a travelling chef

Chef David Myers, AKA the 'gypsy chef', gives us the low-down on his two new restaurants at Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai. **By Sophie McCarrick**

Famed American chef and restaurateur David Myers made his Dubai debut late last year at the Renaissance

Downtown Hotel in Business Bay, with restaurants Bleu Blanc and BASTA!, plus intimate cocktail bar, Poppy.

With restaurants globally, chef David spends much of his time jetting between his international eateries in destinations including the likes of Tokyo, Los Angeles – where he has a Michelin star, Hong Kong, Singapore, and now, Dubai.

Travel is not only a big part of David's day-to-day life, but also his approach to food. With every new city explored, he discovers fresh, seasonal ingredients and techniques that influence his cooking style, which you'll be able to experience firsthand at Bleu Blanc and BASTA! – serving French and Italian cuisines.

During his travels, David's natural presence and charisma have also gained him a following through TV appearances on shows such as Iron Chef America, The Today Show, The

Early Show, MSNBC's Your Business, Top Chef, Master Chef US, Master Chef China and Hell's Kitchen.

GET TO KNOW CHEF DAVID

You're known as the 'gypsy chef' – how did you gain this name?

I was given this title from a good friend while we were working on a TV show pitch that was all about travel, moving around, and creating a concept in a very short window of time. Afterwards he said, "Man you know what, you're a gypsy chef! You have to be the gypsy chef." And it was born out of that. The idea really with "gypsy" is this insatiable wanderlust, and curiosity of different cultures and food that make you happy in any of these places in any moment.

As a very well-travelled chef, where's your favourite place in the world for its food and why?

My favourite place in the world when I travel and when I eat is Tokyo. Japan in general always holds my heart. I

"We have different rare cuts of beef, four to five pieces that are unique and have different flavours and textures to them. Our grilled oysters are exceptional, something we highly recommend. We cook them over coal so they just pop open."



can get such an amazing array of dishes and types of cuisine, like French or Italian but really I stick with Japanese. Sushi or yakitori, tempura, and teppanyaki, all of these are my go-to favorites. Even soba at lunch makes me happy every day.

For fellow food-travellers reading, what three destinations would you recommend planning trips to for food in 2018?

At the moment, I think 2018 is all about Sri Lanka. The cuisine is unbelievable. The way that the locals are cooking seafood with the use of coconut and spices is incredible and very healthy, resulting in vibrant foods, which are not to be missed. On another note, I think Tokyo is always a go-to destination and highly recommended for sushi. If you're going to have sushi,

go to Tokyo! Argentina is another great place to explore steak. Their grass-fed focused beef is really great. Grass-fed is a great movement right now and quite healthy as well.

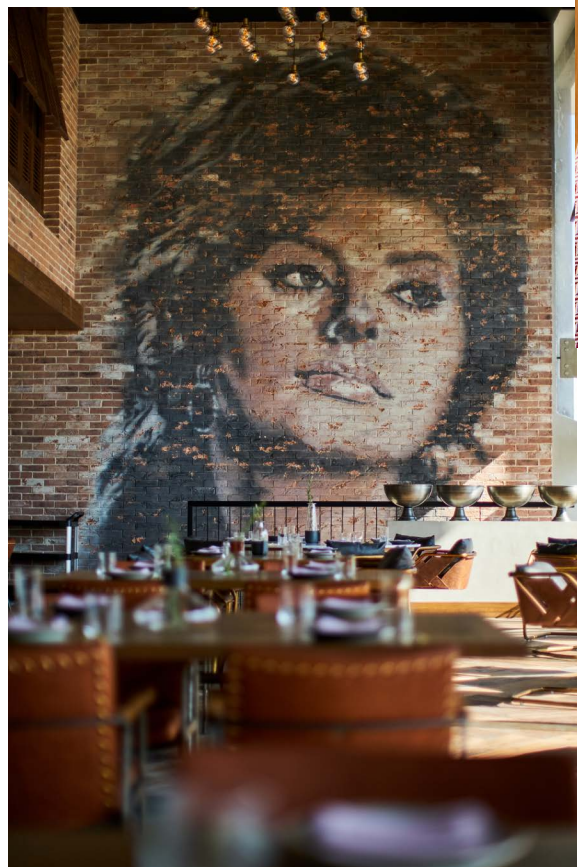
When you're not in the kitchen, what do you like to do?

I love to get out into the ocean and surf, and into the nature and hike. Whichever it may be, it's all about trying to get out into a very natural environment. When I am not doing that, I love to read and really reconnect with myself, allowing me to focus on what is important in life.

How often can we expect to find you in your Dubai kitchens?

I will be in my Dubai kitchens every month

DAVID'S NEW RESTAURANTS



BASTA!

Tell us about the concept at BASTA!...

I think the fact that BASTA! has three different sources of inspiration from Italy is what makes it such a fantastic experience. The pasta is inspired by Rome, with all the classic pasta sauces that you know and love like the carbonara, amatriciana and even dishes like spaghetti with meatballs. It's really simple, but it's classic. It's something that everyone understands. In addition to that, the pizzas that we make are inspired by our trip to Naples, which really is the pizza capital of the world, so you'll enjoy some thin, crispy pizza bases with different toppings. Finally, you'll get a taste of Florence and their world-famous 'bistecca Fiorentina', cooked to perfection over the wood-fired grill. To top off your culinary experience, our bar program is entirely curated by Sam Ross, the owner of Attaboy in NYC and also the brains behind many modern classics, who's a good friend of mine.



For our readers at home looking to visit BASTA!, what must-try dishes would you recommend?

BASTA! is all about the classic Roman pastas, the Neapolitan pizzas and the bistecca Fiorentina. We would love for you to try one of our traditional pastas, whether it is the cacio e pepe, the amatriciana or the carbonara. For the pizza, go classic and try our margarita, it's insanely good! There is a lot of work that has gone into creating our pizza dough and making sure it's perfectly thin and crispy. Then you should of course try our bistecca Fiorentina, or even the veal scaloppini Milanese, another classic Italian favourite. And try to save some space for our desserts, like our crème fraiche panna cotta with cherries, nothing beats a sweet ending to a meal!

Bleu Blanc
What type of food and environment will diners experience at Bleu Blanc?

If I were to have a home in southern France, this would be it. It's where I'd like to invite my friends over to cook for them, and pop open a nice bottle of wine. It has that very homely vibe where our incredible wood-burning grill is representative of the fireplace, or the heart of the house. 85% of our menu is cooked on the grill, either over a live flame or directly on the embers. There are candles all around, vintage items such as our mismatched silver cutlery and classic cook books scattered about. Some of the go-to dishes that we love to serve to our guests are the steak tartare, which is done very simply with just freshly squeezed lemon, olive oil and parmesan. Our grilled king crab legs with beurre noisette and capers is phenomenal. I could eat it every single day. Any of our dishes from the wood-burning grill are delicious. We have some pumpkins that we cook for 12 hours over the fire, served with a little bit of yogurt, porcini and mushroom velouté that is beautiful.

This season, what type of dishes can we expect to find on the menu at Bleu Blanc?

This season at Bleu Blanc, I think you can expect to find a lot of wood-grilled dishes that really hit home, like the whole grilled turbot over the fire, which is just fantastic. We have different rare cuts of beef, four to five pieces that are unique and have different flavours and

textures to them. Our grilled oysters are exceptional, something we highly recommend. We cook them over coal so they just pop open, and to have them like that is delicious, as they are cooked in their own juice.

- To find out more about David Myers, follow him on Instagram @gypsychef or visit gypsychef.com.
- For more information about Bleu Blanc visit bleublanc-dubai.com or call +971 4 512 5533 for reservations.
- For more information about BASTA!, visit Basta-dubai.com or call +971 4 512 5522 for reservations.





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Starting from AED 790 per couple

J&G Steakhouse – 5 course set menu with bottle of grape
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Pancake Day treats to try

SHROVE
TUESDAY
February 13

Our delicious selection of pancake recipes offer something different from the ordinary. Give them a try on Pancake Day



Pumpkin pancakes with
salted pecan butterscotch, p28



gf tip

For perfectly round pancakes, transfer your batter to a piping bag and snip off a large opening. Squeeze the mixture straight into the pan. You can freeze the batter in the piping bag, but add an extra 1/2 tsp baking powder to the mix first. Defrost overnight in the fridge before cooking.

Pumpkin pancakes with salted pecan butterscotch

Pumpkin purée might not seem like the most obvious addition to thick and fluffy pancakes, but it gives them a sweet, nutty flavour and moist texture.

Maple syrup would be an acceptable drizzle if you don't want to go the whole hog with the butterscotch sauce – but I'd really advise that you do!

SERVES 4 PREP 20 MINS PLUS COOLING COOK 25 MINS EASY

250g/9oz pumpkin or squash, peeled, deseeded and chopped into large chunks
2 eggs
3 tbsp light brown soft sugar
25g/1oz butter, melted, plus a little for cooking
125ml/4fl oz buttermilk (or use the same quantity of milk, with a squeeze of lemon juice)
200g/7oz plain flour
21/2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp ground cinnamon
drizzle of flavourless oil, such as sunflower or groundnut, for frying
ice cream, to serve, or yogurt or crème fraîche

For the salted pecan butterscotch
50g/2oz pecans, roughly chopped
50g/2oz butter
50g/2oz light brown soft sugar
1 tsp sea salt flakes
100ml/31/2fl oz double cream

1 Put the pumpkin or squash in a large heatproof bowl, add 1 tbsp water, cover with cling film and microwave on High for 5-8 mins or until really soft – different types will take a varying amount of time.

Drain the pumpkin well and cool completely. If you want to eat the pancakes for breakfast, this step is best done the night before.

2 Once cool, put the pumpkin in a food processor with the remaining pancake ingredients and add a good pinch of salt. Blend until everything is well combined to a smooth, thick batter (alternatively, mash the pumpkin well, then whisk in the remaining ingredients). Transfer to a jug or piping bag and set aside while you make the butterscotch sauce.

3 Toast the pecans in a saucepan for 1-2 mins until a shade darker. Tip out and set aside. Add the butter, sugar, salt and cream to the pan. Bring to a simmer, then bubble gently for a few mins until you have

a shiny sauce. Stir in the pecans and set aside to cool a little.

4 Heat a knob of butter and a drizzle of oil in a large frying pan. Heat oven to 140C/120C fan/gas 1, to keep the pancakes warm while you cook them in batches – have a baking tray to hand. When the butter is foaming, swirl it around the pan, then pour tennis-ball-sized amounts of batter into the pan (see tip, left) – they will spread a little as they cook, so leave some space between each pancake and don't overcrowd the pan. Cook over a low-medium heat. Don't touch the pancakes until you see a few bubbles appear on the surface – have a look underneath and, if the pancakes are golden, flip them over and cook for another 2 mins on the other side. Transfer the cooked pancakes to the baking tray and keep warm in the oven while you continue cooking.

5 Once cooked, pile the pancakes onto plates, top with ice cream, yogurt or crème fraîche, and pour over the salted pecan butterscotch sauce.

PER SERVING 717 kcal • fat 43g • saturates 21g • carbs 68g • sugars 31g • fibre 4g • protein 12g • salt 2.6g

PER SERVING (pancakes only) 363 kcal • fat 11g • saturates 5g • carbs 55g • sugars 18g • fibre 3g • protein 10g • salt 1.1g

Chocolate-filled pancakes with caramelised banana

American-style pancakes have become hugely popular worldwide. Thicker and fluffier than our traditional pancakes, they soak up syrup like sponges and go so well with banana.

SERVES 4 PREP 25 MINS COOK 30 MINS LITTLE EFFORT V

200g/7oz self-raising flour
11/2 tsp baking powder
3 tbsp golden caster sugar
3 large eggs
25g/1oz melted butter, plus extra for cooking
200ml/7fl oz milk
drizzle of vegetable or sunflower oil
200g/7oz chocolate hazelnut spread
2 large bananas, peeled and thickly sliced on an angle
maple syrup and 4 tbsp toasted chopped hazelnuts, to serve

1 To make the pancake batter, mix the flour, baking powder, 1 tbsp sugar and a pinch of salt in a large bowl with a whisk. Make a well in the centre, crack in the eggs and add the melted butter and milk. Whisk the wet ingredients in the centre until combined, then gradually incorporate the dry ingredients until you have a thick, smooth batter. Transfer to a jug (or see tip, right). Heat the oven to its lowest setting and put a couple of baking trays in to keep the pancakes warm as you cook them.

2 Heat a knob of butter and a drizzle of oil in a large, non-stick frying pan over a medium heat. When the butter is foaming, pour rounds of batter into the pan, about 8cm wide – leave space between them as they will expand as they cook. Scoop teaspoons of chocolate spread from the jar and pop one in the centre of each pancake, then use a tiny bit more batter to just cover the

chocolate spread. Continue cooking for 1-2 mins until the underside is golden brown, then carefully flip the pancakes and cook for 1 min more on the other side. When golden, transfer to a baking tray and keep warm in the oven while you cook the next batch.

3 When the pancakes are all cooked, caramelise the bananas. Wipe the frying pan clean with kitchen paper and scatter in the remaining 2 tbsp sugar. Heat the sugar until it melts and starts to bubble to a deep amber colour, then toss in the bananas and coat them in the caramel. If the sugar hardens, drizzle in a little maple syrup or water, then bubble for 30 secs until syrupy.

4 Serve the pancakes stacked with the caramelised banana pieces between the layers and more piled on top. Drizzle over the maple syrup, then scatter over the hazelnuts.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • fibre
PER SERVING 797 kcal • fat 37g • saturates 12g • carbs 94g • sugars 57g • fibre 6g • protein 18g • salt 14g

Perfect American-style pancakes
• If you have a disposable piping bag, snip off the end and use it to smoothly pipe the uncooked batter into the pan.



Protein pancakes

Kick-start the weekend with these better-for-you vegan pancakes. You can make your own quinoa flour by lightly toasting quinoa grains in a dry pan, then whizzing to a powder in a food processor.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 20 mins

COOK 20 mins **EASY** **V**

For the batter

2 tbsp ground linseed
20g ground almonds
300ml soya milk
200g quinoa flour (see above)
1 medium banana, mashed
2 tbsp maple syrup
coconut oil, for frying

For the blueberry chia jam

200g blueberries
2 tbsp chia seeds
1-2 tbsp maple syrup, to taste
2 tsp lemon juice

To serve

100g coconut yogurt
1 tbsp pistachios or pumpkin seeds,
chopped and toasted if you like
2 tsp hulled hemp seeds
mixed berries

1 In a small bowl, stir the linseed with 6 tbsp water and set aside to soak while you make the quick-cook jam.

2 Mash the blueberries with a fork and cook over a low-medium heat until syrupy and bubbling. Take off the heat and stir in the chia seeds, maple syrup and lemon juice. Cool, then transfer to a small serving jar.

3 Put the almonds, soya milk, flour, banana, maple syrup and a pinch of salt in a blender. Stir the linseed to ensure that it's thick and gloopy, then add to the blender and blitz everything until smooth and thick.

4 Heat 1 tsp coconut oil in a large

frying pan over a medium heat and add 1 tbsp dollops of batter to the pan. Cook for a couple of mins on each side. Set aside and keep warm while you repeat the process with the remaining batter, adding another 1 tsp coconut oil with each batch. You should get about 16 small pancakes in total.

5 Pile the pancakes high on two plates, alternating with layers of jam and yogurt. Put a dollop of yogurt on top, then scatter over the nuts or seeds and berries. *Leftover jam will keep in the fridge for up to 1 week.*

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • gluten free

PER SERVING 798 kcals • fat 32g • saturates 8g •
carbs 91g • sugars 39g • fibre 15g • protein 29g • salt 0.3g



Photographs TOM REGESTER

MADE WITH LOVE

Gift your loved one with a homemade sweet treat using London Dairy ice cream this Valentine's Day

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Try these recipes at home!



Cream of goat's cheese, natural strawberry ice cream and crisp

By Romain Van Durmen, Chef De Cuisine,
The Chefs Palette, Fairmont The Palm
SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

For the cream of goat's cheese

300g goat's cheese
70g sugar
2 tbsp agar-agar
200ml milk

For the strawberry salad

50g strawberry
3 leaves of chopped basil
Black pepper

To serve

London Dairy Natural Strawberry ice cream

METHOD

- 1 Put the milk in a pot, with the sugar and agar-agar and heat on the stove.
- 2 When the liquid is boiling, pour it on the top of the goat's cheese and blend it.
- 3 Reserve in the chiller until cold.
- 4 Blend it again, until you have a smooth preparation.
- 5 Pour the mixture into a piping bag and keep chilled.
- 6 For the strawberry salad, cut the strawberries into cubes and season with chopped basil with a little bit of pepper.
- 7 To serve, dress the plate as pictured with the goat's cheese cream, the strawberry salad, London Dairy Natural Strawberry ice cream, and some crisp.

For this recipe you'll need



Natural Strawberry ice cream

Make the most of your enjoyment with these eye-tempting pieces of strawberry in combination with delicious strawberry ice cream. Available as 120ml Cone, 125ml Cup, 500ml Tub, 1l Tub.



Classic chocolate soufflé

By Rajesh Thapa, Pastry Chef, Fairmont The Palm
SERVES 6

INGREDIENTS

300g dark chocolate
300ml milk
80g egg yolk
20g corn flour
200g egg white
80g sugar

To serve

London Dairy Pralines & Cream ice cream

METHOD

- 1 Butter and sugar the inside wall of a medium size ramekin or cup and keep aside.
- 2 Preheat the oven to 190-degree Celsius.
- 3 Melt the chocolate in a Bain Marie and keep aside.
- 4 Boil the milk, mix the yolk and corn flour and cook together with the milk until it becomes a thick shiny paste.
- 5 Mix the paste with melted chocolate and keep aside.
- 6 Meanwhile, beat the egg white and sugar (mix the sugar in gradually), to make the meringue mixture.
- 7 Fold the meringue mixture with the chocolate mix, till well combined.
- 8 Pipe your mix into the individual ramekins or cups and bake at 190-degree Celsius for about 10- 12 minutes.
- 9 To serve, remove from the oven and serve hot with powdered sugar on top and London Dairy Pralines & Cream ice cream.

For this recipe you'll need



Pralines & Cream

If you're looking for creamy vanilla ice cream mixed with swirls of caramel sauce and caramelised pecan nuts, your exquisite praline pleasure is here. Available as 120ml Cone, 125ml Cup, 500ml Tub, 1l Tub.

London Dairy

London Dairy premium ice cream is crafted from the finest ingredients from around the world. Crafted with the connoisseur in mind – only the finest ingredients will do! From luscious fruit handpicked in the sun-kissed fields of Europe, to the exquisite texture of rich Belgian chocolate, London Dairy insists on delivering the richest taste and the smoothest texture, blending ingredients with the creamiest milk to create a magnificent ice cream symphony.

London Dairy products have no artificial colours or preservatives. Available in a range of collections and sizes, enjoy London Dairy ranges include the likes of Premium, Lite and Yoghurt, with ranges in various tub and cup sizes, or refresh yourself with one of sticks, cones or bars.



TOM KERRIDGE'S

One-pot wonders

One-pot cooking not only saves on washing-up but also stops flavour being lost during the cooking process. Bring to the table and serve straight from the dish

photographs PETER CASSIDY



Thai shellfish pot, p34



Good Food contributing editor Tom Kerridge is a BBC presenter and chef-owner of The Hand & Flowers, The Coach and new venture The Butcher's Tap – all in Marlow, Buckinghamshire. His latest book, *Lose Weight for Good* (Dhs115, Absolute Press), is out now.

[@ChefTomKerridge](#)

Lamb biryani

I'm a big fan of Indian food, and love the range of regional dishes. Biryani is a real favourite of mine, especially when cooked dum-style, whereby the ingredients steam in their own juices under a dough crust, which traps in all the amazing spices. Instead of dough, I've used a tight lid of tin foil, which works just as well.

SERVES 6 **PREP** 10 mins plus at least 2 hrs marinating **COOK** 50 mins plus resting **EASY**

400g lamb neck, cut into small cubes
4 garlic cloves, grated
1 tbsp finely grated ginger
1 tbsp sunflower oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 tbsp each cumin seeds and nigella seeds
1 tbsp Madras spice paste
200g basmati rice, rinsed well
8 curry leaves
400ml good-quality lamb or chicken stock
100g paneer, chopped
200g spinach, cooked and water squeezed out

To serve

chopped coriander
sliced green chillies
plain yogurt

1 Toss the lamb in a bowl with the garlic, ginger and a large pinch of salt. Marinate in the fridge overnight or for at least a couple of hours.

2 Heat the oil in a casserole. Fry the lamb for 5-10 mins until starting to brown. Add the onion, cumin seeds and nigella seeds, and cook for 5 mins until starting to soften. Stir in the curry paste, then cook for 1 min more. Scatter in the rice and curry leaves, then pour over the stock and bring to the boil. Meanwhile, heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.

3 Stir in the paneer, spinach and some seasoning. Cover the dish with a tight lid of foil, then put the lid on to ensure it's well sealed. Cook in the oven for 20 mins, then leave to stand, covered, for 10 mins. Bring the dish to the table, remove the lid and foil, scatter with the coriander and chillies and serve with yogurt on the side.

PER SERVING 394 kcal • fat 19g • saturates 8g • carbs 31g • sugars 3g • fibre 2g • protein 23g • salt 0.6g



Sausage & butter bean simmer-and-serve

Butter beans tend to be underused in recipes, but they soak up the flavour of what they're cooked in really well, including this braise.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins

COOK 50 mins **EASY** ✨

1 tbsp sunflower oil
16 chipolatas (I used spicy chorizo ones because I love the chilli heat)
2 onions, sliced
2 celery sticks, sliced
8 garlic cloves, sliced
1 rosemary sprig
600ml chicken stock
2 x 400g cans butter beans, drained
75g butter, cubed
small pack parsley, leaves picked and chopped
2 lemons, zested
crusty bread, to serve

1 Gently heat the oil in a large pan. Fry the sausages all over until brown, then remove and set aside. Add the onion to the pan and fry for 5-10 mins until golden and soft, then add the celery, garlic and rosemary, and cook for 2 mins more. Pour over the stock and bring to the boil.

2 Reduce the heat and simmer for 20 mins, then add the sausages back to the pan along with the butter beans. Simmer for 8 mins, then stir in the butter, parsley and lemon zest. Ladle into bowls and serve piping hot with lots of chunky bread.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • 2 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 739 kcal • fat 52g • saturates 22g • carbs 33g • sugars 9g • fibre 14g • protein 29g • salt 2.7g

Thai shellfish pot

Thai flavours go well with all fish and seafood, so you can use your favourites in this dish. I've used squid, white fish and mussels, but large prawns, clams or cracked crab claws would all work very well. I've made my own curry paste to add extra vibrancy, but a good-quality ready-made red curry paste is fine if you're short on time.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 30 mins

COOK 20 mins **EASY**

1 tbsp sunflower oil
4 lime leaves
200g prepared squid, cut into rings
400ml coconut milk
300g boneless firm white fish like monkfish or hake, cut into chunks
500g mussels, cleaned

For the curry paste

1 large shallot, sliced
1 lemongrass stalk, shredded
2 red chillies, sliced
5 garlic cloves
thumb-sized piece of galangal or ginger, peeled and sliced
1 tsp each ground coriander and ground cumin
2 tbsp fish sauce
4 tbsp roasted peanuts
1 tsp soft brown sugar

To serve

chopped coriander
sliced chillies
lime wedges

1 For the curry paste, put all the ingredients in a spice grinder or blender and blitz to a fine paste. Will keep in the fridge for a few days.

2 Heat the oil in a wok or casserole dish. Add the curry paste and lime leaves, and fry for a minute or so. Stir in the squid so it's coated all over in the paste, then pour over the coconut milk. Bring to a simmer, then submerge the white fish in the sauce and scatter over the mussels. Cover the wok with a lid and cook for 5-8 mins or until the mussel shells are fully open and the fish is just cooked. Sprinkle with the coriander and chilli, then put in the middle of the table, along with the lime wedges. Let everyone help themselves

GOOD TO KNOW 1 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 538 kcal • fat 37g • saturates 18g • carbs 10g • sugars 50g • fibre 5g • protein 39g • salt 2.7g



Beef & Guinness stew with bacon dumplings

Hearty stews typify winter. They're comforting and make you feel properly cosy. Dumplings add an extra layer of warmth, but you could also simply top the stew with pastry and call it a pie.

SERVES 4 PREP 30 mins
COOK 3 hrs MORE EFFORT
✱ stew only 🍴 📖

2 tbsp vegetable oil
1kg boneless beef shin,
cut into 3cm chunks
200g pearl onions or
small shallots
4 medium carrots, chopped to
the same size as the shallots
3 celery sticks, cut into
bite-sized chunks
3 tbsp plain flour
500ml beef or chicken stock
500ml Guinness
1 large thyme sprig
4 star anise
buttered cabbage and mash,
to serve

For the dumplings

100g, smoked bacon, finely minced
½ tbsp oil
1 tsp thyme leaves
125g self-raising flour
60g beef suet
1 egg yolk
small pack parsley, leaves
picked and finely chopped

1 First, make the dumplings. Gently fry the bacon until crisp in a large lidded casserole dish. Stir in the thyme leaves, then tip into a bowl and leave to cool slightly. Add the flour and suet to the bacon, and stir everything together. Make a well in the middle, then add the egg yolk, parsley, ½ tsp pepper and 2 tbsp very cold water, and start to mix into a dough. Keep adding water until you have a firm but pliable dough. Divide the mixture into eight balls and chill until needed.

2 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Quickly clean the casserole dish

with some kitchen paper, then heat the oil. Brown the meat really well in batches, then set aside. Tip in the onions or shallots, carrots and celery, brown well, then stir in the flour. Add the meat and any juices back into the dish, give everything a good stir, then pour in the stock and Guinness. Season, then tuck in the thyme and star anise and bring everything to a simmer. Cover with a lid, then cook in the oven for about 2 hrs until the meat is tender.

3 Remove the stew from the oven and arrange the dumplings evenly on top. Put the lid back on and return to the oven for 20 mins, then cook for a final 10 mins with the lid off to brown the dumplings. Bring the dish to the table in all its glory. Spoon into bowls with cabbage and mash, to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • iron • 2 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 800 kcs • fat 41g • saturates 16g •
carbs 43g • sugars 10g • fibre 7g • protein 57g • salt 1.9g

5-INGREDIENT SUPPERS

Make dinner a breeze with these deceptively simple, full flavoured recipes, each using only 5 things you need to shop for

recipes SOPHIE GODWIN *and* ELENA SILCOCK

photography STUART OVENDEN

veg-packed sarnie



Beet hummus & crispy chickpeas subs

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins

COOK 10 mins **V**

gf good to know

Oil, vinegar, salt and pepper all count as storecupboard ingredients, we assume you'll have these.

300g pack cooked beetroot in water, drained, half sliced
400g can chickpeas, drained
3 tbsp vegetarian pesto
olive oil
splash of vinegar (white wine vinegar if you have it)
2 large ciabatta rolls, sliced in half
2 large handfuls mixed rocket, watercress & spinach salad

1 Blitz the whole beetroot, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the chickpeas, 2 tbsp pesto and 1 tbsp oil in a food processor with some seasoning until you have a thick, smooth hummus. Heat the ciabatta following the pack instructions.
2 Fry the remaining chickpeas in a little oil until crisp, then set aside. Toss the salad leaves with the remaining pesto and a splash of vinegar. Slice the rolls, then assemble the sandwiches with the hummus, beet slices, salad leaves and fried chickpeas.

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • calcium • folate • fibre • iron • 3 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING energy 639 kJ • fat 22g • saturates 3g • carbs 77g • sugars 16g • fibre 14g • protein 24g • salt 1.6g

White fish with sesame noodles

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins

COOK 10 mins **EASY**

150g soba or wholewheat noodles
(300g if using pre-cooked)

25g toasted sesame seeds, plus
extra to serve

2 tbsp soy sauce

1 tbsp oil

1 tsp rice vinegar (or any white
vinegar)

200g spinach leaves

2 seabass fillets

1 Use a spice grinder or pestle and mortar to crush the sesame seeds, then stir in the soy sauce, oil, 1 tbsp of water and a splash of rice vinegar, to make a creamy dressing, season and set aside. Bring a pan of salted water to the boil, add the noodles and cook following pack instructions, then drain and set aside. Using the same pan, tip in all the spinach and cook until reduced down and dark green. Tip in the noodles, along with the sesame dressing and a splash of water and toss well to heat through.

2 Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan over a medium to high heat. Season the skin of the seabass, then place in the pan skin-side down, fry until the skin has crisped up and the flesh has nearly all turned opaque, around 3 mins. Flip over and fry for 30 seconds further, until the fish is flaking and cooked through. Divide the noodles and greens between two bowls and place the fish on top. Scatter over the toasted sesame seeds and serve.

treat yourself

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • fibre • 1 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING energy 624 kcals • fat 24g • saturates 4g • carbs 54g • sugars 3g • fibre 7g • protein 45g • salt 4.1g

Red pepper linguine

SERVES 1 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 15 mins **EASY** **V**

1 roasted red pepper (from a jar or roast one yourself)
50g walnuts, toasted, plus extra to serve
1 small garlic clove
100g linguine or spaghetti
parmesan or vegetarian alternative, grated, to serve

1 Blitz the roasted red pepper with 30ml olive oil, the walnuts and the garlic in a food processor, season well and set aside.

2 Bring a pan of salted water to the boil, add the pasta and cook for 1 min less than the pack instructions and drain, reserving a ladleful of cooking water. Tip the pasta back into the pan, along with the reserved cooking water and red pepper sauce, and return to the heat to warm through. Tip the pasta into a bowl and top with the parmesan and some chopped toasted walnuts. Season and serve.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • 1 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING energy 1,011 kcal • fat 66g • saturates 8g • carbs 78g • sugars 3g • fibre 7g • protein 23g • salt 0.2g



dinner for 1

Curried cauliflower & lentil soup

SERVES 3-4 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 30 mins **EASY** V

1 cauliflower
2 tsp fennel seeds
150g red lentils
3 tbsp curry paste of your choice
½ lemon, juiced

1 Remove the outer leaves from the cauliflower, cut off the stalk and roughly chop, then cut the head into small florets. Toss a quarter of the florets in 1 tbsp oil and 1 tsp of the fennel seeds, season well, then tip into a roasting tin and set aside.

2 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Heat ½ tbsp oil in a saucepan over a medium heat and add the remaining fennel seeds, toast for 2 mins, then add the lentils and the remaining cauliflower. Stir in the curry paste, then add 1 litre water and bring to the boil. Simmer for 25 mins until the cauliflower is tender and the lentils are cooked through.

3 Meanwhile, put the roasting tin of cauliflower in the oven and cook for 20 mins until crisp and slightly charred. Tip the soup mixture into a food processor and blitz until smooth, tip back into the pan to warm through, adding the lemon juice and a little water if it's too thick. Tip into bowls and top with the crispy cauliflower and fennel seeds to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • healthy • low fat • low cal
• fibre • vit c • iron • 2 of 5-a-day • gluten free
PER SERVING (4) energy 242 kcals • fat 8g •
saturates 1g • carbs 27g • sugars 5g • fibre 6g •
protein 13g • salt 0.5g

healthy and
comforting





crowd pleaser

Chorizo & pea risotto

SERVES 4 PREP 5mins COOK 30mins EASY

1 tbsp oil
200g chorizo, peeled and chopped
300g arborio risotto rice
2 tbsp vinegar (white wine vinegar if you have it)

1.2 litres chicken stock (fresh is best), heated until simmering
200g frozen peas
60g parmesan, finely grated, plus extra to serve

- 1 Heat the oil in a large frying pan, tip in the chorizo and fry until it is crisp and all the oil has been released. Remove a quarter of the chorizo with a slotted spoon and set aside.
- 2 Tip the rice into the pan, stir to coat it in the oil and toast for a min or so, then pour in the vinegar. Once the vinegar has evaporated, add a ladleful of the stock, stir then, once absorbed, add a bit more. Continue doing this for about 20 mins until most of the stock has been absorbed and the rice has swollen but still has a slight bite.
- 3 Tip in the peas, parmesan and the remaining stock. Give everything a good stir. Once the cheese has melted, season with black pepper, then divide between bowls, topping each portion with the remaining crisp chorizo and extra grated parmesan.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre

PER SERVING energy 642 kcs • fat 25g • saturates 10g • carbs 68g • sugars 4g • fibre 6g • protein 34g • salt 2.8g

Garlic chicken parcels

SERVES 2 PREP 10 mins COOK 30 mins EASY

2 chicken breasts
320g sheet all butter puff pastry
150g Boursin or garlic & herb cream cheese
½ lemon, zested and cut into wedges to serve
1 tbsp olive oil, plus extra for brushing
200g mixed pack green beans and broccoli

Friday night special

- 1 Heat oven to 220C/200C Fan/gas 7. Cut a slit halfway in each chicken breast, then put each one between two pieces of baking parchment and bash with a rolling pin to flatten it slightly.
- 2 Cut your sheet of pastry in half widthways and put both halves on a baking tray. Sit a chicken breast on top of each half, then cram the cavities with the Boursin (don't worry if a bit of cheese oozes out). Season, scatter over the lemon zest then fold the edges of the pastry in to the centre and pinch shut. Flip each parcel over so the seal is on the bottom. Brush with a little oil, then bake for 30 mins until deep golden.
- 3 About 10 mins before your parcels are ready, steam or boil the greens until tender. Toss in the oil and season. Serve alongside your chicken parcels with lemon wedges for squeezing over.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • fibre • 1 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING energy 1,115 kcs • fat 80g • saturates 41g • carbs 57g • sugars 6g • fibre 8g • protein 48g • salt 2.4g



one-pan
wonder

Smoked mackerel & leek hash with horseradish

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 20 mins **EASY**

250g new potatoes, halved
2 tbsp oil
2 large leeks, thinly sliced
4 eggs
100g peppered smoked mackerel,
skin removed
2 tbsp creamed horseradish

- 1** Put the potatoes in a microwaveable bowl with a splash of water, cover, then cook on high for 5 mins until tender (or steam or simmer them).
- 2** Meanwhile, heat the oil in a frying pan over a medium heat, add the leeks with a pinch of salt and cook for 10 mins, stirring so they don't stick, until softened. Tip in the potatoes, turn up the heat and fry for a couple of mins to crisp them up a bit. Flake through the mackerel.
- 3** Make four indents in the leek mixture in the pan, crack an egg into each, season, then cover the pan and cook for 6-8 mins until the whites have set and the yolks are runny. Serve the horseradish on the side, with the pan in the middle of the table.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • iron • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING energy 546 kJ • fat 35g • saturates 6g • carbs 25g • sugars 7g • fibre 7g • protein 29g • salt 1.7g





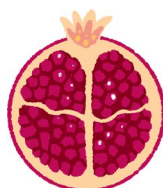





5 budget superfood swaps

Eating well on a budget can be challenging. Here we show how to get the nutritional benefits of often overpriced superfoods at a fraction of the cost

words SARAH LIENARD **recipes** SOPHIE GODWIN **nutritional analysis** KERRY TORRENS **photographs** SAM STOWELL

So-called 'superfoods' can be expensive, but you don't need to splash the cash to eat a healthy and balanced diet.

While there is no single 'miracle' food that will give you all the nutrition you need, these cheaper, everyday ingredients are a great way to give your body a nutritional boost. They have a similar nutritional profile to their more costly counterparts.

SWAP...		...FOR
 <p>WHEATGRASS</p>	Both these leafy greens are rich in chlorophyll, amino acids and vitamins C, E, B and K. They also contain beta-carotenes, as well as lutein and zeaxanthin (for eye health). But rocket also provides glucosinolates, which help to protect against cancer. Try our recipe, opposite.	 <p>ROCKET</p>
 <p>MACA POWDER</p>	Maca root powder and purple sprouting broccoli both come from the cruciferous vegetable family (as do cauliflower and cabbage) and are rich in anti-cancer compounds, as well as calcium, magnesium, iron and vitamin E. Including cruciferous veg regularly in your diet will help to balance hormones, especially oestrogen, and support energy levels. Try our recipe, overleaf.	 <p>PURPLE SPROUTING BROCCOLI</p>
 <p>POMEGRANATE</p>	These are both rich in antioxidants, which protect us from the damaging effects of day-to-day stressors and also help to regulate blood pressure and boost circulation. They are a source of fibre, potassium, vitamin C and B vitamins, including heart-friendly folate. The beetroot leaves are also a good source of vitamin K. Try our recipe at bbcgoodfood.com/beetroot-falafel .	 <p>BEETROOT</p>
 <p>GOJI BERRIES</p>	Both berries contain protective antioxidants, including anthocyanins, which are good for your heart and have anti-ageing properties. They also supply carotenoids, including beta-carotene, which the body converts to vitamin A for healthy skin, eyes and a strong immune system; and lycopene, which protects the skin against UV damage. Try our recipe at bbcgoodfood.com/cranberry-squash-salad .	 <p>CRANBERRIES</p>
 <p>COCONUT OIL</p>	These saturated fats are stable at high temperatures, making them good choices for high-temperature cooking. However, like all fats, they should be consumed in moderation. Butter supplies some of the useful fats (medium-chain triglycerides) that coconut oil is famed for (although at lower levels). Try our buttered sweetcorn & squash recipe at bbcgoodfood.com/buttered-sweetcorn-squash .	 <p>BUTTER OR GHEE</p>

Roasted carrot, rocket & lentil salad

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 35 mins **EASY** **V**

300g carrots, peeled and sliced lengthways
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
½ tsp cumin seeds
1 lemon, zested and juiced
½ tsp honey

½ tsp wholegrain mustard
250g ready-cooked lentils
¼ cucumber, chopped
80g rocket, washed
1 avocado, sliced
50g feta, crumbled

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Toss the carrots in 1 tbsp oil, the cumin seeds and some seasoning. Spread out on a baking tray and roast for 30-35 mins

until soft and charred around the edges.

2 Meanwhile, whisk together the remaining oil, the lemon zest and juice, honey and mustard. Once the carrots are cooked, stir through all the remaining ingredients, then toss through the dressing to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • fibre • 4 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING 596 kJ • fat 35g • saturates 8g • carbs 40g • sugars 14g • fibre 18g • protein 22g • salt 2.1g



Sesame salmon, purple sprouting broccoli & sweet potato mash

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins
COOK 15 mins **EASY**

1½ tbsp sesame oil
1 tbsp low-salt soy sauce
thumb-sized piece ginger, grated

1 garlic clove, crushed
1 tsp honey
2 sweet potatoes, scrubbed and cut into wedges
1 lime, cut into wedges
2 boneless skinless salmon fillets
250g purple sprouting broccoli
1 tbsp sesame seeds
1 red chilli, thinly sliced (deseeded if you don't like it too hot)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180 fan/gas 6 and line a baking tray with parchment. Mix together ½ tbsp sesame oil, the soy, ginger, garlic and honey. Put the sweet potato wedges, skin and all, into a glass bowl with the lime wedges. Cover with cling film and microwave on high for 12-14 mins until completely soft.

2 Meanwhile, spread the broccoli and salmon out on the baking tray. Spoon over the marinade and season. Roast in the oven for 10-12 mins, then sprinkle over the sesame seeds.

3 Remove the lime wedges and roughly mash the sweet potato using a fork. Mix in the remaining sesame oil, the chilli and some seasoning. Divide between plates, along with the salmon and broccoli.

GOOD TO KNOW healthy • low cal • calcium • folate • fibre • vit c • omega-3 • 2 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 463 kcs • fat 22g • saturates 4g • carbs 29g • sugars 15g • fibre 10g • protein 32g • salt 1.1g





HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY

— FALL IN LOVE WITH THE INDULGENT TASTE OF LONDON DAIRY. —

— londondairy.com —

Recipes made with love *for Valentine's Day*

Valentine's Day
is on February 14

Prepare a meal bursting with flavour for your loved one this Valentine's Day. Take comfort in the kitchen with these new seasonal recipes from food writer **Rosie Birkett** *photographs* DAVID MUNNS



Good Food contributing editor Rosie Birkett is a food writer and stylist. Her cookbook, *A Lot on Her Plate*, is out now (Dhs130, Hardie Grant).

[Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) @rosiefoodie

Mussels with chorizo, beans & cavolo nero

The bold flavours of mussels and chorizo are perfect against the mellow cannellini beans. I'm growing cavolo nero on my allotment, and it's just such a lovely leafy vegetable to use because it stands up to being cooked with the punchy chorizo.

SERVES 2 PREP 15 mins COOK 10 mins EASY 🍴 📖

2 shallots, finely chopped
small bunch parsley, stalks
and leaves separated and
chopped

2 garlic cloves, finely
chopped

100g cooking chorizo, skin
removed and chopped

1 tbsp olive oil

100g cavolo nero, stems
discarded, leaves
shredded

150ml white wine or sherry

400g can cannellini beans,
drained and rinsed

500g mussels, cleaned
and beards removed

1 lemon, halved

1 Gently cook the shallots, parsley stalks, garlic and chorizo in the oil in a large pan with a lid or casserole dish, until the shallots are softened – about 5 mins. Add the cavolo nero and cook for a couple more mins, then add the wine and cook for another 1 min.

2 Stir in the beans, then add the mussels, ensuring they're well-coated with the sauce, and cover with the lid. Cook for a few mins, shaking the pan to release the mussel juices, until they've all opened (discard any that haven't). Scatter over the parsley leaves and squeeze over the lemon to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • vit c • iron • 2 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 596 kcal • fat 26g • saturates 8g •
carbs 24g • sugars 5g • fibre 10g • protein 49g • salt 3.4g



Caramelised onion & chicory tart with Gorgonzola

Blue cheese and chicory is a classic combination, so I've used creamy Gorgonzola to top this tatin-style tart, along with some hazelnuts for extra crunch. This makes a really nice starter or serve instead of a cheese course.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 15 mins
COOK 40 mins **EASY** **V**

1 sheet ready-rolled puff pastry
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp butter
4 thyme sprigs
1 tbsp brown sugar
2 small onions, peeled and cut into thick round slices
2 heads of red chicory, trimmed and sliced in half lengthways
½ lemon, juiced
75g Gorgonzola (or vegetarian alternative)
1 tbsp toasted hazelnuts (optional)

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Cut a round of pastry the same size as the ovenproof pan you are using, then put it on a baking sheet. Leave to chill in the fridge for at least 30 mins.

2 Heat the oil, butter and thyme in the pan until the butter has melted. Add the sugar and stir in. Put the onions and chicory cut-side down in the tin. Season and allow to caramelise for about 10 mins. Squeeze over the lemon juice, then remove from the heat and leave to cool slightly.

3 Put the disc of pastry on top and push it down around the edges of the pan, so it's encasing the contents. Pierce the pastry with a knife all over to let out the steam, then bake in the oven for 40 mins, or until the pastry is puffed and golden. Allow to cool for 10 mins before carefully turning out onto a plate. Don't panic if it sticks to the pan – you can gently scrape the pieces off using a palette knife, then set them back in the tart. Season. Tear the cheese over the top, scatter over the hazelnuts, if using, then drizzle with a little more olive oil to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW 1 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 477 kcal • fat 32g • saturates 15g • carbs 35g • sugars 8g • fibre 4g • protein 9g • salt 1.3g



Roast chicken with oranges, chicory & spelt

This simple chicken supper can be prepped ahead and cooked a couple of hours before your date arrives, for dinner party-worthy results. The bitter orange and chicory cut through the rich chicken beautifully, and the spelt picks up the flavourful juices.

SERVES 2 **PREP** 10 mins plus 6 hrs marinating **COOK** 2 hrs **EASY** **!**

4 bone-in chicken thighs, skin on
100ml vermouth
1 tbsp olive oil
2 heads of chicory, halved
2 oranges, halved
200g pearled spelt, cooked with a bay leaf following pack instructions
1 tbsp chopped parsley
splash of red wine vinegar (optional)
For the marinade
3 tbsp olive oil
4 small shallots, halved
2 thyme sprigs, leaves removed
1 orange, zested and juiced
2 garlic cloves, crushed
pinch of red chilli flakes
2 tsp honey
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

1 To make the marinade, whisk all the ingredients together and season. Thoroughly coat the chicken in the marinade and leave for 6 hrs, or preferably overnight.

2 Remove the chicken from the fridge 30 mins before cooking. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Tip the chicken and its marinade into a roasting tin along with the vermouth. Cover the tin with foil and roast in the oven for 1 hr 40 mins.

3 Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil over a medium to high heat in a frying pan. Put the chicory and orange halves cut-side down in the pan, and cook for 5 mins until caramelised. Set aside until the chicken is ready.

4 Remove the foil from the roasting tin and add the caramelised chicory and oranges, squeezing over the juice of one. Turn the heat up to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and cook for a further 15 mins, until the chicken is nicely caramelised. Remove the tin from the oven and transfer the chicken, chicory and oranges to a plate and keep warm.

5 Put the roasting tin over a medium heat on the hob, and squeeze in the juice of half a caramelised orange, adding a little water and using a wooden spoon to scrape up any crispy bits. Cook until the juices are reduced to a sauce that coats the back of a spoon. Toss the cooked spelt through the juices, then add the parsley. Taste and season, adding the red wine vinegar, if you like. Divide the spelt between two plates and top with the chicken, chicory and half a caramelised orange to squeeze over.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • vit c • iron • 2 of 5-a-day
PER SERVING 1,092 kcal • fat 50g • saturates 10g • carbs 90g • sugars 33g • fibre 16g • protein 050g • salt 0.5g

Hake with paprika oil potatoes

I just got back from Galicia, where hake is revered as a fish for its meaty white flakes and subtle, gentle flavour. Galicians keep things simple with their fish and seafood, often serving it unadorned with comforting boiled potatoes and paprika oil (famously served with octopus). We have great hake in this country too, and I've allowed the fish to take centre stage with just a little paprika oil to lift it.

SERVES 2 PREP 15 mins COOK 20 mins EASY 🍴

200g potatoes, peeled and chopped into chunks	2 hake steaks, about 160g each
2 bay leaves	160g purple sprouting broccoli
60ml olive oil, plus 1 tbsp	½ lemon, juiced
1 parsley sprig	1 tbsp smoked paprika
1 red onion, finely sliced	
150ml white wine, plus 1 tbsp	

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Boil the potatoes in a pan of salted water with a bay leaf for about 12 mins, or until tender. Drain, reserving the cooking water.

2 Heat 1 tbsp olive oil with a bay leaf in a non-stick frying pan. Add the red onion, season with salt and pepper and fry gently. After 5 mins add a tbsp of white wine and cook for a further 10-15 mins, until softened, fragrant and starting to caramelise.

3 Season the hake steaks and rub with a little olive oil. Put them in a roasting tin and pour in the wine and 100ml of the potato water, along with the tbsp olive oil and parsley sprig. Cook for 10 mins in the oven, or until the steaks are opaque and flaking.

4 Cook the broccoli in salted water for 3-6 mins (depending on thickness) until tender. Season with lemon juice and black pepper. Pour the rest of the oil into the onion pan and gently warm it – you want it warm, but not scalding or sizzling. Stir in the smoked paprika, then turn off the heat.

5 When the fish is ready, toss the potatoes through the onions and warm oil, and divide between plates. Remove the fish from the water with a fish slice and put on the plates with the broccoli. Drizzle over the remaining paprika oil and serve.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • vit c • iron • 2 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING 669 kcs • fat 40g • saturates 6g • carbs 26g • sugars 9g • fibre 7g • protein 34g • salt 0.5g





Chocolate orange flapjacks

To make these dairy-free, use the same quantity of coconut oil instead of butter. You still get the essential buttery crunch of a traditional flapjack, it will just be a bit more crumbly.

MAKES 12 PREP 10 mins plus cooling COOK 25 mins EASY V

200g porridge or jumbo oats
120g unsalted butter, melted and cooled
1 orange, zested and juiced
100g dark chocolate, roughly chopped
80g brown sugar
100ml golden syrup

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6 and line a 25 x 18cm baking tin with baking parchment. Put the oats in a bowl with a pinch of salt.


2 Gently melt the butter in a small pan with the sugar and syrup. Once melted, remove from the heat and allow to cool for a couple of mins. Grate the orange zest into the pan and squeeze in the juice. Pour into the oats and stir thoroughly, until it's all combined, then add three quarters of the chopped chocolate.

Pour the whole mix into the baking tin and press down with the back of a spoon. Press the remaining chocolate into the tray, then bake for 15-20 mins, until golden. Cut into squares and remove from the tin. Allow to cool completely on a wire rack before serving.

PER SERVING 243 kcs • fat 13g • saturates 7g • carbs 27g • sugars 15g • fibre 2g • protein 3g • salt 0.2g

Blood orange & yogurt bundts with Campari glaze

As soon as blood oranges are in season, I use them in everything from salads and sauces to desserts. Here, the zest and juice is paired with creamy yogurt to make a rich, moist sponge. The Campari drizzle plays to the bitterness of the orange, and the cardamom gives a lovely aromatic lift.

MAKES 12 cakes **PREP 10 mins**
COOK 25 mins **MORE EFFORT** 

80g almond flour
80g plain flour
80g light spelt flour
2 tsp baking powder
1½ tsp ground cardamom
130g Greek yogurt
4 large eggs
250g golden caster sugar
150g coconut oil, melted and cooled
2 blood oranges, zested and juiced
½ lemon
For the glaze
4 tbsp Campari
½ blood orange, zested and juiced
2 tbsp natural yogurt
80g icing sugar
You will need
12 small silicone bundt moulds

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Sift the flours, 1 tsp of the baking powder, a pinch of salt and cardamom in a bowl and lightly whisk together. Spoon the yogurt into another bowl with the other tsp of baking powder and stir. In the bowl of a stand mixer, whisk the eggs and sugar for about 3-4 mins, until pale and frothy.

2 Sift half the flour mixture into the egg and sugar mix, then use a large metal spoon or silicone spatula to gently fold it through, being careful not to knock out too much air. Once combined, scrape the yogurt into the mix and fold it in. Sift in the rest of the flour mix and fold it in again. Now pour the melted, cooled oil down the sides of the bowl and carefully but quickly fold that in. Pour in the citrus zest and juice and give it a few final folds to combine. You should have a creamy, airy batter.

3 Pour the mixture into silicone bundt moulds on a baking sheet. Bake for 20-25 mins, or until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Remove from the moulds and leave to cool on wire racks.

4 To make the glaze, heat the Campari in a pan until reduced to 1 tbsp, then pour into a bowl and allow to cool. Whisk in the orange zest and juice, a pinch of salt and the yogurt, then sieve in the icing sugar and whisk until you have a smooth glaze. Drizzle over the bundts and serve.

PER SERVING 381 kcal • fat 20g • saturates 13g • carbs 41g • sugars 31g • fibre 1g • protein 7g • salt 0.4g

Star ingredient

Chocolate

Searching for the ultimate Valentine's treat?
Look no further – homemade cake, cookies and
a new twist on chocolate mousse will hit the spot

recipes DIANA HENRY *photographs* TOM REGISTER



Chocolate & lime cake, p56



Chocolate ganache with sea
salt, olive oil & toasts, p56



Good Food contributing editor Diana Henry is an award-winning food writer. Each month she creates exclusive recipes using

seasonal ingredients. Her tenth book, *Simple* (Dhs130, Mitchell Beazley), is out now. [@DianaHenryFood](#)

The best thing my mum could have done during the day when we were all at school, was bake a chocolate cake. We would know if she'd made one as the cake tin would be sitting on the counter when we got home; the baking parchment sticking out over the edges, and the beaters from the mixer still covered in chocolate buttercream. None of us were sure whether to dive into the tin or grab a beater and lick it.

I can remember feeling the weight of the cake as I checked the thickness of the buttercream in the middle (hoping mum hadn't had a fit of meanness when doing that bit) and the anticipation as we poured glasses of ice-cold milk. Having chocolate cake with a glass of milk – something I allow myself only occasionally these days – is the nearest you can get to eating happiness. The cake is rich; the milk cleanses; the satisfaction is immense.

Chocolate cake was the first cake I learned to make. Nearly everything I know about dealing with chocolate I learned through trial and error. My mum taught me to melt squares in a bowl set over a pan of gently simmering water, but I realised, after successive disasters, how careful you have to be when dealing with it. The bowl shouldn't even touch the water over which you're melting your chocolate (it will melt too quickly). Even steam can turn

chocolate into an unworkable lump as water combines with the dry cocoa solids. If you need to add liquid, such as cream, you must add a large enough quantity to make the solids form a solution. If you have to add small amounts of liquid – a few spoonfuls of alcohol, for example – you must add it before the chocolate melts.

Overheating chocolate – because I'm rushing – is the crime I most often commit. Overheat your melting squares and the mixture will turn thick and 'muddy'.

If you do overheat chocolate, immediately transfer it to a new bowl and stir in a handful of chopped chocolate. Beat like mad: the additional chocolate should reduce the temperature and rescue it sufficiently to make it usable in a cake. Choosing good chocolate for cooking (a minimum of 70% cocoa solids) is important, but patience is also essential.

Espresso, hazelnut & chocolate shortbread

MAKES 20 **PREP 50 mins** plus chilling
COOK 30 mins **EASY**

2 tbsp instant espresso powder
250g butter, softened at room temperature
85g caster sugar
225g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
75g rice flour
75g unblanched hazelnuts, halved
To decorate
150g 70% dark chocolate, broken into chunks
75g blanched hazelnuts, toasted and very roughly chopped (leave some pieces quite large)

1 Mix the espresso powder with 1 tsp hot water to form a paste (you'll think it isn't enough water but it is – don't add more otherwise it'll be too watery). Set aside.

2 Beat the butter and sugar until soft and blended, then beat in the coffee mixture. Don't overbeat the mixture as you don't want to incorporate too much air.

(If the coffee isn't completely incorporated, don't worry – it will be once you add the flours).

3 Sift together the flours and add them to the butter in three lots, mixing in with a wooden spoon and, eventually, your hands. Bring together into a ball, then transfer to a lightly floured surface and quickly knead in the hazelnuts. Don't overdo this – you don't want the butter to get too warm. Press the dough into a circle, wrap it in cling film and put in the fridge for about 40 mins.

4 Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to 0.75cm thick. Cut out circles about 6cm across with a biscuit cutter and put the circles on a non-stick baking sheet (or two baking sheets, depending on their size). Re-roll the dough as you need

to, but try not to do this too often. Put the baking sheets in the coldest part of the fridge and leave them for about 45 mins. Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3.

5 Bake the shortbread for 20 mins, or until the top is just firm when you press it with your index finger. Take out of the oven and leave on the baking sheets to cool for a while (it is very fragile when hot), then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.

6 Melt the chocolate in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water, then remove the bowl and leave to cool a little and firm up somewhat. Dip each piece of shortbread halfway in the melted chocolate, then put on a sheet of baking parchment. Sprinkle the toasted hazelnuts on the chocolate half and leave to set completely. *Will keep for 4 days in an airtight tin.*

PER SHORTBREAD 259 kcals • fat 18g • saturates 9g • carbs 19g • sugars 6g • fibre 2g • protein 3g • salt 0.2g



Chocolate & lime cake

SERVES 8 PREP 1 hr 10 mins

COOK 40 mins EASY

For the sponge

225g butter, softened at room temperature, plus extra for greasing

225g light brown soft sugar

4 large eggs, at room temperature, lightly beaten

170g self-raising flour

½ tsp baking powder

50g cocoa powder

2 tbsp milk

50ml lime juice (about 4 limes)

25g caster sugar

For the candied lime zest

3 limes

100g granulated sugar

For the lime buttercream

100g unsalted butter

200g icing sugar

2 small limes, finely zested

For the chocolate & lime icing

50ml double cream, plus 1 tbsp

100g 70% dark chocolate, cut into small pieces

2½ tbsp lime marmalade

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Butter and line the base of 2 x 20cm cake tins with baking parchment. Beat the butter and

sugar together until pale and fluffy. Add the eggs gradually, beating well between each addition. Fold in the flour, baking powder and cocoa powder. If the mixture is very stiff, stir in the milk. Spoon into the cake tins and bake for 20-25 mins or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Turn the cakes out onto a wire rack and peel off the parchment. Gently heat the lime juice and sugar together, stirring to help the sugar dissolve. While the cakes and the syrup are still warm, pierce the cakes all over using a skewer and spoon over the syrup. Leave to cool completely.

2 Next, make the candied lime zest. Pare the zest from the limes, cutting it cutting it into broad strips. Cut away the white pith and discard, then slice the zest into matchstick-sized strips. Put them in a pan and cover with water, then bring to the boil. Cook for 1 min, then drain and rinse. Dry and set aside. Juice the limes and add enough water to make 225ml. Heat gently with the sugar until the sugar has melted. Add the strips of zest and simmer until the liquid has almost evaporated and turned syrupy – about 30 mins. Scoop the strips of zest out with a slotted spoon, then place them on parchment to dry.

3 To make the buttercream, beat the butter and icing sugar together using an electric mixer or by hand (start off gently or the icing sugar will fly everywhere), until pale and light, but don't beat for so long that it gets too fluffy. Add the lime zest and beat again until smooth. Chill in the fridge until the buttercream is firm, but spreadable.

4 To make the icing, heat the cream, then take it off the heat. Add the chocolate and let it melt, stirring to help it along. Put the marmalade in a small pan with the extra 1 tbsp cream and heat slowly to dissolve. Add to the chocolate and cream and stir until everything is blended. Leave to cool a little, but not so long that it becomes firm. Pour over one of the layers of sponge and leave to cool and set – it will run down the sides and drip off.

5 Spread the buttercream over the other layer, then put the chocolate coated layer on top. Decorate with the candied lime zest.

PER SERVING 855 kcal • fat 49g • saturates 29g • carbs 93g • sugars 74g • fibre 4g • protein 9g • salt 0.9g

Chocolate ganache with sea salt, olive oil & toasts

SERVES 6 PREP 10 mins, plus chilling

COOK 10 mins EASY

250ml double cream

250g 70% dark chocolate

1 loaf ciabatta, finely sliced

extra virgin olive oil

sea salt flakes

1 Heat the cream in a heavy-bottomed pan until it is warm but not boiling (you don't want to overheat the chocolate, so be careful not to overdo it). Take the pan off the heat, then add the chocolate to the pan with the cream

and leave to melt for a while, then beat with a wooden spoon. At first it looks like it won't go smooth, but it will. Leave to cool and set. You can also chill it, but take it out of the fridge before serving so that it isn't too firm or 'fridge cold'.

2 Cut the bread into fine slices and toast on each side (the best way is under the grill, but watch it like a hawk). Serve the ganache in glasses in small scoops. Drizzle generously with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Brush the toast with more olive oil and serve with the ganache.

PER SERVING 641 kcal • fat 49g • saturates 25g • carbs 37g • sugars 12g • fibre 6g • protein 9g • salt 0.5g

Alila

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OMAN RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

Crazy for Chocolate

The ultimate 'go-to' for comfort and indulgence, chocolate is adored worldwide. Had a bad day? Snuggled up on the sofa? Feeling under the weather? Want to give a special gift? – we all (well, the great majority of us) turn to chocolate. So, what is it exactly that makes this wonderfood so marvelous? Here, we explore all things chocolate, from cacao tree to chocolate bar. **By Sophie McCarrick**

Chocolate comes from a small tropical tree native to Central and South America called the *Theobroma cacao* – or simply, 'cacao'. The tree is also grown commercially throughout the tropics, and around 70% of the world's cacao is grown in Africa.

It's used in cakes, puddings, brownies, cookies, candies, granola bars, cereals, and even used in sauces to compliment different types of meat. It's gifted for Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween, Christmas and many other celebratory occasions, and it's even used to drink in beverages like chocolate milk.

If you're curling up with a massive slab every night, obviously it's not going to be the healthiest for you or your waistline, however, medically it's been proven that chocolate (meaning dark chocolate only) with a cocoa percentage of 70% or more, is very good for us!

As research tells, health experts have found that dark chocolate – when consumed in moderation – is great for the heart, circulation and the brain.

For treating brain injuries like a concussion, it's thought that the anti-inflammatory qualities of dark chocolate are beneficial, while flavanols are reported to assist in reducing memory loss in older people. It's also been reported that they can help with protect the skin against sun damage (although we wouldn't recommend skipping a splash of sun cream!).

Another study claims that consumption of cocoa reduces levels of bad cholesterol, while raising the levels of good cholesterol. This in turn could potentially lower the risk of cardiovascular disease.

And, to top off the benefits, chocolate contains phenylethylamine (PEA) – the chemical your brain produces when you have that loved-up feeling. With PEA encouraging your brain to release feel-good endorphins, there's no surprise that a good bar of chocolate brings us comfort and smiles.

CHOCOLATE SHOPS

Get your chocolate fix at these chocolate stores in the UAE.



Godiva

Location: Dubai Mall, Mall of the Emirates, plus various other locations.
Call: 800-9-463482
Visit: godiva.com



Mirzam Chocolate Makers

Location: Building 3, Dubai Design District
Call: 04-3335888
Visit: mirzam.com



Boutique Le Chocolat

Location: City Walk, Dubai
Call: 04-5905075
Visit: boutiquelechocolat.com



Cocosia Artisan Chocolates

Location: Shop 2 & 3, Rasis Business Centre, Al Barsha 1 (behind Mall of the Emirates).
Call: 04-3950977



Patchi

Location: Dubai Mall, Mall of the Emirates, and many other locations across the Middle East.
Call: +971 43411117
Visit: patchi.com

HEALTH BENEFITS



Dedicated chocolate shop, Boutique Le Chocolat, located at City Walk Dubai, tells what we all want to hear – that chocolate can be good for you!

Do you love chocolate, but worry that it's bad for you? Well, the truth is that it's all down to the quality of the chocolate that's important and making sure that you choose chocolate with a high percentage of cocoa (dark chocolate bars), and that are made with more natural ingredients and less sugar.

Chocolates with a high percentage of cocoa are packed full of antioxidants and loaded with organic compounds that are biologically active and function as antioxidants, studies have shown that quality cocoa contains more antioxidant activity than other fruits such as acai berries. What's more, it has the potential to improve blood flow and lower blood pressure as well as lower the risk of cardiovascular disease. Even better, dark chocolate may also improve brain function, showing that consuming small amounts regularly improves blood flow to the brain.

To find out more, or taste the high-quality range of chocolates on offer at Boutique Le Chocolat, call 04-5905075 or e-mail info@boutiquelechocolat.com

Did you know?

1 CHOCOLATE MONEY ISN'T JUST SOMETHING YOU GET AT CHRISTMAS. In Mayan times cultivation of the cocoa bean was restricted, making chocolate money worth a fortune.



2 A RIVER OF CHOCOLATE ONCE EXISTED. In the original version of Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory filmed in 1971, the famous river Augustus Gloop nearly drowned in was filled with 15,000 gallons of water mixed with chocolate and cream. With all the cream, the river spoiled not too long after creation, and the cast revealed it left a terrible smell.

3 CACAO TREES LIVE FOR A LONG (VERY LONG) TIME. They can live to be 200 years old, but they produce marketable cocoa beans for only 25 years.



4 CHOCOLATE WAS ONCE VERY DIFFICULT TO BUY. That is until the first machine-made chocolate was produced in Barcelona, Spain, in 1780



5 CREATION OF THE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE WAS ACCIDENTAL. In 1930 Ruth Wakefield realised she was out of baker's chocolate and mixed broken piece of Nestle chocolate into her cookie dough, expecting to create chocolate cookies. Instead, the chocolate chip cookie was born, and she later sold the idea to Nestle in return for a lifetime supply of chocolate.

TAKE A CHOCOLATE COURSE

Want to take your love for chocolate a step further? Enroll in a course nearby, to learn the craft of a chocolatier.

Where? Chocolate Academy, Business Bay, Dubai
What's on offer? The Chocolate Academy offers a range of hands-on courses, ranging from the likes of 'Chocolate Initiation', 'Confectionary Technology', 'Chocolate and Snacking', 'Pastries', 'Wedding Cakes', and more.

Visit: www.chocolate-academy.com/ae/en/

Call: 04-2782000



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recipes JULIET SEAR *photographs* WILL HEAP



Juliet Sear is a baking wizard and food artist. Discover her kids' cooking videos on the BBC Good Food Youtube channel [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) @JulietSear





Halloumi traybake

SERVES 4 PREP 15 mins COOK 1 hr
EASY V

750g baby new potatoes, halved
2 medium red onions, quartered and broken up into large pieces
4 tbsp olive oil
400g can chickpeas, drained
1 large red pepper, sliced into strips
½ romanesco broccoli or cauliflower (about 400g), cut into small florets
250g mixed colour cherry tomatoes
4 garlic cloves, peeled
250g pack reduced fat halloumi, thinly sliced
small bunch basil, leaves torn

1 Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Put the potatoes in a large roasting tin with the onion. Pour over 2 tbsp olive oil and roast in the oven for about 30 mins.
2 Add the chickpeas, pepper, romanesco, tomatoes and garlic. Drizzle with 2 tbsp oil, then roast for a further 20-25 mins until everything is cooked and browning nicely. Toss together briefly and put the halloumi slices on top. Put it under the grill for 5-10 mins, or until the cheese is melting and browning (keep an eye on it). Scatter over the basil leaves to serve.

GOOD TO KNOW calcium • folate • fibre • vit c • 4 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING 564 kcals • fat 24g • saturates 8g • carbs 53g • sugars 15g • fibre 12g • protein 28g • salt 1.6g

Healthier veggie carbonara

SERVES 4 PREP 20 mins COOK 10 mins EASY V

4 medium courgettes (use a mix of yellow and green if you can get them)
300g spaghetti
3 large egg yolks
160g vegetarian parmesan-style cheese
1 tbsp olive oil

small bunch fresh lemon thyme or thyme, leaves picked
200g chestnut mushrooms, roughly chopped
4 garlic cloves
small bunch flat-leaf parsley, chopped (optional)
½ lemon, zested and juiced

1 Put a large pan of salted water on to boil. Halve the courgettes lengthways and scoop out and discard the core, then slice the courgettes at an angle into small diagonal pieces. Put the spaghetti in the pan of boiling water and cook following pack instructions.

2 To make the creamy carbonara sauce, put the egg yolks in a bowl, add half of the grated cheese, and mix with a fork. Add up to 3 tbsp water to make the sauce less thick. Season and set aside.

3 Heat a large frying pan on a medium to high heat and pour in a little olive oil. Fry the courgette slices and thyme leaves with a good grinding of black pepper for a minute or two until the courgette starts to soften, then add the mushrooms. Fry for 2-3 mins until golden and slightly softened. For the last minute of the cooking, add the garlic.

4 Working quickly, drain the pasta, reserving a little of the cooking water. Toss the pasta in the pan with the courgettes and mushrooms, then remove from the heat and add a ladleful of the reserved cooking water and the egg and cheese sauce. Add the fresh parsley, if using, and the lemon zest and juice, then sprinkle over most of the remaining cheese. Stir everything together quickly to coat the pasta. The egg will cook if the pasta is still hot. If you're worried about it, put back on the heat for 1 min.

5 Pour in a little more of the cooking water, if needed. You should have a silky and shiny sauce. Season to taste, then sprinkle with a little more cheese to serve. Eat straight away, as the sauce can become thick and stodgy if left for too long.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • vit c • 2 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING 552 kcals • fat 20g • saturates 9g • carbs 59g • sugars 4g • fibre 8g • protein 29g • salt 0.8g





Veggie toad-in-the-hole

We've used Quorn Best of British sausages in this recipe as we've found that they're most like meat sausages, but you can use any ones you like.

SERVES 4 **PREP** 10 mins plus resting the batter
COOK 40 mins **EASY** **V**

2 tbsp rapeseed oil
8 vegetarian sausages
For the batter
4 medium eggs
325ml semi skimmed milk
250g plain flour

1 To make the batter, beat the eggs and milk together in a bowl, add 1 tsp salt, then beat again and leave to stand for 30 mins. Tip in the plain flour and beat well with a whisk until smooth. If you can, make this 2 hrs before needed and allow to stand before pouring into the tin.

2 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Pour 2 tbsp oil in a 28 x 23cm roasting tin (or a tin roughly that size), coat the sausages in the oil and roast them in the oven for about 8-10 mins.

3 Stir the batter, then remove the tin from oven and pour the batter over the hot oil and sausages (you can do this over a low heat on the hob to keep the oil nice and hot). Put the tin back in the oven and cook for 10 mins, then turn the temperature down to 180C/160C fan/gas 4 and cook for a further 25-30 mins or until the batter is cooked through.

4 Test with a knife in the centre to check it's cooked. Serve with the crunchy polenta roast potatoes, caramelised carrots and veggie gravy (see recipes, right), if you like, plus some green vegetables.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre

PER SERVING 620 kcal • fat 24g • saturates 4g • carbs 63g • sugars 7g • fibre 8g • protein 33g • salt 3.6g



Crunchy polenta roasties

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 10 mins **COOK** 1 hr 20 mins **EASY** V

9 large potatoes (about 1.25kg), peeled and cut into large chunks
about 200ml olive oil
1-2 tbsp dried polenta

- 1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Pour a good glug of oil in a large roasting tin and put in the oven. Put the potatoes in a saucepan and cover with boiling water from the kettle. Bring to the boil and cook for 7-8 mins.
- 2 Drain the potatoes, then toss them in the polenta to help them dry out and get a fluffy coating. Carefully tip the potatoes into the hot roasting tin, drizzle over a little more oil and toss to coat.
- 3 Roast for 30 mins, then turn them over and roast for 30 mins. Turn once more and cook for a further 10 mins. These can go on the lower shelf while you make your toad-in-the-hole (see recipe, left), and can cook for a further 15-20 mins if required.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free

PER SERVING 479 kcals • fat 34g • saturates 5g • carbs 38g • sugars 2g • fibre 3g • protein 4g • salt 0.1g

Caramelised honey carrots

SERVES 4 **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 35 mins **EASY** V

500g pack Chantenay
carrots, trimmed
1 tbsp honey
2 tsp butter
1 tsp thyme leaves

- 1 Put the carrots in a large frying pan with a lid. Cover with cold water, put the lid on and bring to a boil. Once boiling, take the lid off and cook over a medium heat for about 25-30 mins until all the water has evaporated.
- 2 Reduce the heat, add the honey, butter and thyme leaves and gently cook for about 5 mins until the carrots are caramelised and golden.

GOOD TO KNOW low fat • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING 69 kcals • fat 3g • saturates 1g • carbs 9g • sugars 9g • fibre 4g • protein 1g • salt 0.2g

Veggie gravy

SERVES 4 (makes about 400ml) **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 45 mins **EASY** V *

1 onion, chopped
2 carrots, finely chopped (about 200g)
2 celery sticks, finely chopped (about 200g)
2 bay leaves
1 large thyme sprig
large knob of butter (or 2 tbsp olive oil)
1 tbsp golden caster sugar
2 tbsp plain flour
2 tsp Marmite (optional)
1 tbsp tomato purée
2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1L vegetable stock
soy sauce to season

- 1 Gently cook the veg, herbs and butter in a pan for 10-12 mins until the vegetables start to brown. Scatter over the sugar and continue to cook for 1-2 mins until a little caramelised. Stir in the flour and combine well. Add the Marmite, if using, tomato purée and vinegar. Pour over the stock a little at a time stirring as you go.
- 2 Simmer everything together until you have a thickened sauce, this will take about 30 mins. Sieve, then add soy sauce and a touch more Marmite to season and colour. *Will freeze for up to two months.*

PER SERVING 139 kcals • fat 6g • saturates 1g • carbs 18g • sugars 9g • fibre 2g • protein 2g • salt 0.8g

Mini lentil shepherd's pies

SERVES 4-6 **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 1 hr 30 mins **EASY** V

2 tbsp butter or olive oil, plus extra for the pie dishes
1 large red onion, chopped
2 carrots, finely diced, about 200g
4 celery stalks, chopped
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
150g chestnut mushrooms, chopped (blitz these to fairly tiny pieces for small kids)
2 tsp thyme leaves (optional)

250g Puy lentils
100ml red wine (optional)
900ml vegetable stock
2 tbsp tomato purée
1 tbsp Marmite (optional)
peas, to serve (optional)
For the mashed potato topping
850g Maris Piper potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
75g butter
100ml milk (or alternative)

1 To make the filling, heat the butter or oil in a large saucepan and gently fry the onion, carrots, celery and garlic for 15 mins until soft and golden. Turn up the heat, add the mushrooms, then cook for 3-4 mins. Sprinkle in the thyme and add the lentils. Pour over the wine and stock, then simmer gently, uncovered, for about 40-45 mins until the lentils are soft. If you find the mixture is drying out, you can add a splash more stock or water.

2 Meanwhile, put the potatoes in a large pan, pour over boiling water and boil for 15-20 mins until tender. Drain well. You can use a potato ricer at this stage to make them super creamy, or mash with the butter and milk, then season with salt and pepper.

3 Remove the lentils from the heat, add the tomato purée and Marmite, if using. Stir well and check to see if you need seasoning, then add a good grinding of black pepper.

3 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. To assemble, butterd four-six small pie dishes or one a large dish and spoon in the lentil mixture, then top with mash. It's fun to pipe on the mash if you have a piping bag, but if not, you can spoon it on and fluff into peaks with a fork. Bake for 30-40 mins until golden. Serve with peas on the side, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW fibre • iron • 3 of 5-a-day

PER SERVING (6) 443 kcs • fat 17g • saturates 10g • carbs 52g • sugars 9g • fibre 11g • protein 16g • salt 0.9g



Loaded baked potatoes with slaw

SERVES 4 **PREP** 20 mins **COOK** 1 hr 45 mins **EASY** V

4 baking potatoes (about 700g)
1 tbsp olive oil
30g butter
150g plain 0% fat yogurt, plus extra to serve
6 small spring onion, washed, outer layer removed and finely sliced
200g can no added sugar sweetcorn, drained

150g reduced-fat strong cheddar, grated
small bunch chives, finely chopped
For the healthy coleslaw
125g plain 0% fat yogurt
½ tsp wholegrain mustard
½ small white cabbage, about 400g
2 medium carrots, about 150g
1 small red onion

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4. Wash and pierce the skins of the potatoes a few times with a sharp knife. Rub the skin with a little olive oil and bake for 1 hr 30 mins until soft inside and crisp on the outside.

2 Meanwhile, make the coleslaw. Mix the yogurt and mustard together in a bowl. Then, use a grating attachment on a food processor, or a box grater, to grate the cabbage and carrots. Either grate the onion or chop as finely as you can. Tip all of the vegetables into the bowl and stir through the yogurt and mustard.

3 Once the potatoes are crisp on the outside and soft inside, remove from the oven and cut in half. Scoop out the flesh and mash with the butter and yogurt, stir in the spring onion and sweetcorn and most of the cheese, reserving a little of the cheese for topping, season if needed.

4 Turn the oven up to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Load the filling back into the crisp potato skins, top with the remaining cheese, and put them back in the oven on a baking sheet for about 10-15 mins, or until the cheese is melted and the edges are browning. To serve, sprinkle with chives and serve alongside the coleslaw with a dollop of natural yogurt.

GOOD TO KNOW folate • fibre • vit c • 2 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING 493 kcs • fat 16g • saturates 8g • carbs 57g • sugars 19g • fibre 11g • protein 23g • salt 0.1g





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Flavours *of the* Middle East

BHAR,
Renaissance
Downtown Hotel,
Dubai

Our latest Food Club event saw foodies enjoy a fun-packed evening with Executive Chef Mohanad Alshamali at the newly launched BHAR restaurant at Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai on January 9, 2018. The VIP dining experience featured the most delicious selection of modern Middle Eastern cuisine, and included a sumptuous three-course meal and a live cooking demonstration.

BHAR, the Arabic word for 'spice', is designed to awaken the senses, evoking a feeling of tradition in a contemporary Middle Eastern style brasserie. It's a place where the dishes on the tables are just as playful as the restaurant's colour palette, and guests are encouraged to come as they are.

Open for lunch and dinner, BHAR is now also serving Friday brunch every week. The lively event encourages brunchgoers to party the Lebanese way with live

food stations, shisha, heritage drinks and local Dj Karrouhat on the decks, amongst vibrant Arabic surroundings, overlooking the Dubai Water Canal.

From fattoush and falafel to labneh and lamb chops, Chef Mohanad has added his signature flair to every item on the menu. With modern techniques infused into traditional classics, and contemporary twists on Middle Eastern family recipes, BHAR takes you on a culinary journey across the region and across time.



Gilles Perrin, Director of Culinary, Renaissance Downtown Hotel, Dubai, welcomes guests to the event.



Executive Chef Mohanad Alshamali hosts a live cooking demo for diners



Chef Mohanad and editor, BBC Good Food ME, Sophie, present raffle draw winner with her prize of brunch for four at BHAR.



Foodies enjoy the live cooking demo.



Chef Mohanad mingles with guests enjoying the food.



At the welcome reception, guests enjoy BHAR's signature 'gunpowder ice tea'.



Chef Mohanad and editor, BBC Good Food ME, Sophie.



Text by SOPHIE MCCARRICK | Photographs by Maksym Porieckin



Scrumptious dishes at BHAR

Here's what our foodies ate at the event. All dishes are available on BHAR's a la carte menu.



Starter

Grilled eggplant salad, medjoul dates and dukkah



Main

Spiced venison served with honey roasted topinambour, figs, eggplant and date puree



Dessert

Sweet milk bastille, strawberry and almonds

**BHAR, RENAISSANCE DOWNTOWN HOTEL, DUBAI
MASARI DRIVE DUBAI, BUSINESS BAY**

To make a reservation at BHAR or for more information

bhar-dubai.com +971 4 512 5511 @bhardxb & @rendxb

FOOD



DRINK



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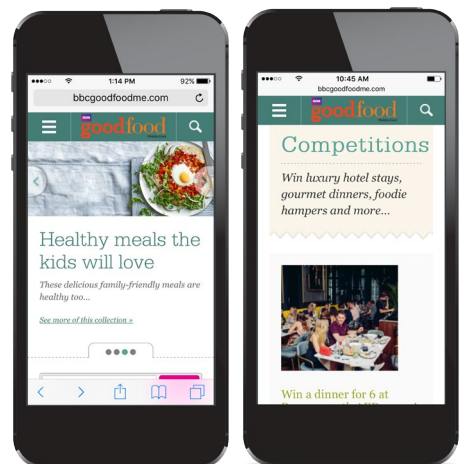
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BBC
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Middle East

Make your own za'atar

The Levantine spice mix is easy to prepare and oh-so versatile

recipe MIRIAM NICE

photograph WILL HEAP

Za'atar

Za'atar is a staple of Levantine and Middle Eastern cooking. The simplest way to enjoy it is to dip pieces of warm flatbread in olive oil, then dunk them in the spice mix so it sticks.

But don't stop there: za'atar also makes a great seasoning. Try it sprinkled over salads, poached eggs and hummus, or scatter over a whole chicken before roasting.

SERVES around 9 tbsp **PREP** 5 mins **COOK** 2 mins **EASY** V

2 tbsp cumin
2 tbsp dried oregano

2 tbsp sesame seeds
2 tbsp sumac

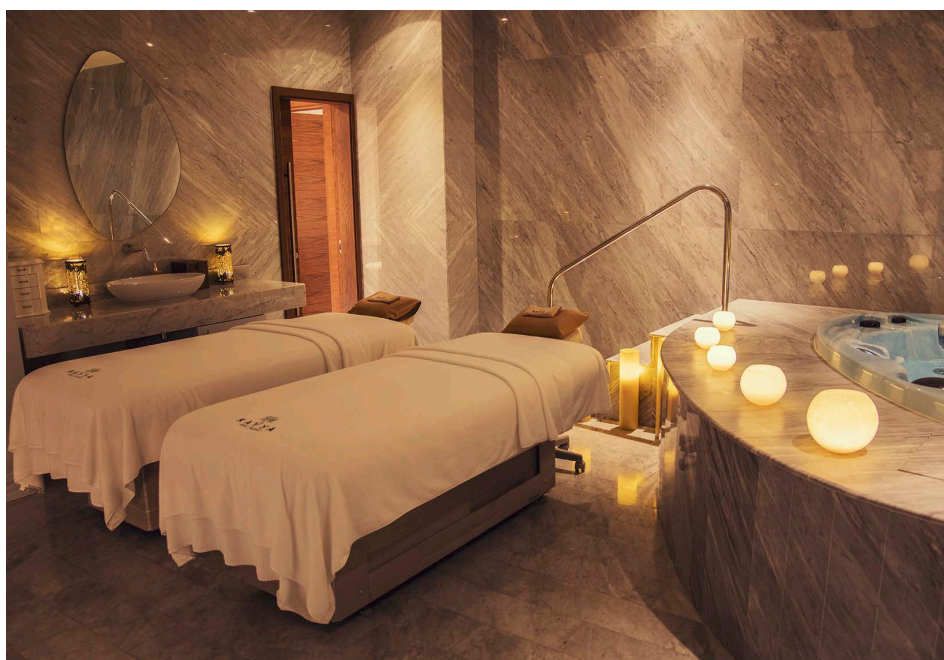
1 Lightly toast the cumin seeds in a dry pan until they just start to release their aroma, then grind them to a fine powder using a pestle and mortar. Stir in all the other ingredients, plus 2 tsp salt and 1 tsp ground black pepper. Will keep in a clean jar or airtight container for a month.

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • gluten free

PER SERVING 26 kcals • fat 2g • saturates none • carbs none • sugars none • fibre 1g • protein 1g • salt 1.2g

ROMANTIC RESORTS

Looking to treat your loved one to something that lasts longer than just Valentine's Day? Here are a few of our favourite local destinations for relaxation and gourmet bliss, offering special packages for the occasion. **By Sophie McCarrick**



Where?

**THE RETREAT PALM DUBAI
MGALLERY BY SOFITEL, THE
PALM JUMEIRAH, DUBAI, UAE**

What's on offer?

The tone for the magical evening is set upon the limo pick up, that shall be received by the first three lucky couples to book, and shall see them travelling in style to Retreat Palm Dubai. The journey shall start as soon as guests walk through the doors, the special couple will be treated to a luxurious spa treatment just after check-in. Following this, a romantic table awaits with delicious starters on offer, followed by a sumptuous main course at the Social Kitchen and a decadent dessert at Ripple, whilst staring out at the spectacular views of either the sea or swimming pool. The

hotel itself shall provide a grand welcome through ambient lighting, stunning bouquets and amenities customised for the occasion. The experience doesn't have to end at the end of the culinary feast, as guests will be treated to an intimate in-room breakfast the next day. The Retreat Palm Dubai also offers a lavish buffet for those interested in a relaxed evening with the finest range of food and beverage at Vibe restaurant.

Available from February 14 to 16, the 'Valentine's Day Romantic Experience' is priced at Dh1,500 per couple for an overnight stay, a romantic dinner for two, a 45-minute couples' treatment and in-room breakfast.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call 04-5247777 or visit theretreatpalmdubai.com.

Where?

**WALDORF ASTORIA RAS AL
KHAIMAH, UAE**

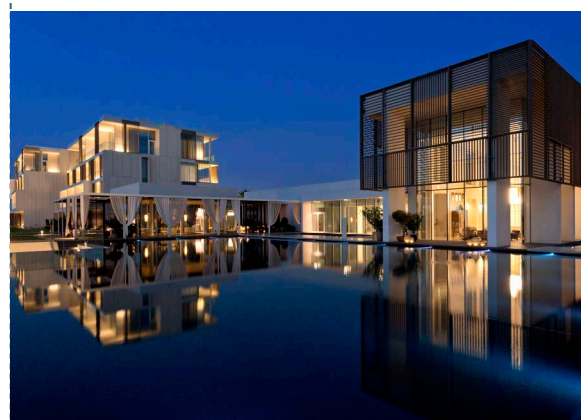
What's on offer?

Trust in hospitality that has welcomed kings and queens, hosted the world's grandest events and offered self-assured elegance and luxury for years. With a resort that exudes sophistication and charm, Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah truly reflects its Arabian heritage and offers a bespoke sense of romance that's difficult to achieve elsewhere.

In recognition of Valentine's Day, the resort will offer a 'Suite' Heart Package from February 14 to 16. Couples are invited for a stay of indulgence, from an overnight stay in a sumptuous suite, to the intimate Valentine's dinner served in Azure Restaurant, set against the backdrop of fireworks. Arise to a delicious and healthy breakfast served on the balcony, showcasing views of the turquoise waters below.

Alternatively, opt for the Classic Room option, with prices starting at Dh1,905 per couple.

Get in touch: Call +971 7 203 5555 or e-mail rasalkhaimah.info@waldorfastoria.com.



Where?

**THE OBEROI AL ZORAH BEACH
RESORT, AJMAN, UAE**

What's on offer?

Love is in the air and for those looking to really impress their loved ones this Valentine's Day. With packages from Dh3,810++ up to Dh18,500++, Cupid's arrows are sure to strike at the five-star resort, set on a picturesque white sandy beach and surrounded by azure lagoons and lush green mangroves.

The exclusive Valentine's Suite package includes a 60-minute massage, an hour's cruise on the Ajman Pearl yacht and an intimate candlelit dinner with 'premium bubbly' on the beach, followed by an in-suite breakfast in the morning.



Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah, UAE

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call + 971 65044888 or e-mail reservations.toaz@oberoihotels.com or visit oberoihotels.com/hotels-in-al-zorah-ajman/.



Where?

QASR AL SARAB DESERT RESORT BY ANANTARA, LIWA DESERT, UAE

What's on offer?

Nestled in the Liwa Desert, two hours away from Abu Dhabi, perched on the edge of the desert sits the luxury resort Qasr Al Sarab Desert Resort by Anantara. Here you can indulge in a staycation on the edge of the rolling sands of the Empty Quarter and experience desert life. Whether it's horse riding, camel trekking, mountain biking, or archery, there are plenty of adrenaline-inducing activities to keep intrepid travellers occupied. Meanwhile, those who prefer a more sedated pace of life can choose a sunset desert picnic, spa treatment or a yoga class on the golden sand dunes, whilst family and friends can bond during the Liwa tour where they will be able to discover historical places and unique locations that portray the rich culture of the UAE.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a reservation, call 02-8862088, e-mail infoqas@anantara.com or visit qasralsarab.anantara.com.

Where?

DESERT PALM DUBAI, UAE

What's on offer?

Enjoy a night of splendour during Valentine's week with a romantic dinner, overnight stay and a ballet performance at Desert Palm Dubai. Promising an unforgettable evening, the Valentine's Day special package coincides with the Covent Garden Dance Company's annual Ballet under the Stars show.

Make a grand gesture this Valentine's day and surprise your special someone with a romantic escape. Book a luxurious suite or private villa including tickets to 'Ballet under the Stars', which will include a three-course theatre dinner and bubbly reception. Guests are treated to special rates with additional benefits on stays on February 15 and 16.

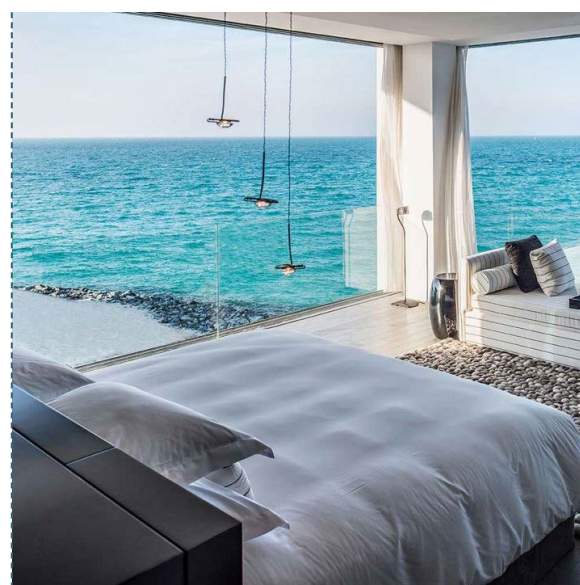
With prices starting from Dhs2,700 per night, the offer includes a la carte breakfast in Epicure for two, two Platinum tickets for 'Ballet under the Stars', complimentary non-alcoholic mini bar items, 15% discount in Desert Palm Dubai's restaurants and bars, 15% discount on spa treatments, and priority early check in and late check out (subject to availability).

A well-kept secret, Desert Palm Dubai is only 20 minutes from Dubai's urban heart. Located on an extensive polo estate, the resort is nestled amidst lush polo fields. An oasis of calm, this sumptuously and discreetly luxurious retreat is a hidden world with cosy private pool villas, chic spaces for culinary refinement and spa indulgences surrounded by vast green landscapes, rare birds and endless sunshine.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call 04-3238888 or e-mail tickets@desertpalm.ae.



Desert Palm Dubai, UAE



Where?

ZAYA NURAI ISLAND, OFF SAADIYAT ISLAND, ABU DHABI

What's on offer?

Feel a world away from the hustle and bustle of Dubai by taking just a quick 15-minute boat ride from Abu Dhabi's Saadiyat Island to Zaya Nurai Island, where you'll be surrounded by crystal blue waters and white sand beaches.

From February 14 to 15, the resort is offering a one-night package in a romantic beach villa, with a couples' spa treatment, breakfast in bed and dinner at the island's signature restaurant, Frangipani, where you'll be able to enjoy a dinner of seared scallops, duck confit ravioli and chocolate and strawberry infused mousse. The romance package is priced at Dhs5,399 per couple, plus taxes.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call 02-5066222 or visit zayanuraisland.com.



Where?

ANANTARA AL JABAL AL AKHDAR RESORT, OMAN

What's on offer?

Coupling pleasant winter climes and some of the most magnificent views in the Middle East, Anantara Al Jabal Al Akhdar Resort is a jaw-dropping choice for wooing a loved one this Valentine's Day. After checking into their luxurious room overlooking the dramatic canyon or secluded villa complete with heated private infinity pool, lovebirds can disconnect from everyday life and reconnect with each other in this extraordinary setting.

Intrepid couples have plenty of choice, with a range of exciting activities designed to immerse them into the surrounding culture, history and landscape. Whether it is hiking through the valleys accompanied by a 'Mountain Guru', paying a visit to the nearby souqs, learning the art of Omani cuisine with cookery lessons or practicing sun salutations atop

the mountain, there is something for everyone. For the perfect photo opportunity, adrenaline-seekers can even try the Ultimate Jabal Activity Wall, allowing them to navigate the mountainside using a via ferrata and ziplines for unsurpassed views of the vast valley below.

Meanwhile, those looking for a slower pace of life can head to the world-renowned Anantara Spa to sample the special 'Red is Forever' package. Surrounded by red rose petals in a private treatment room, the two-hour bonding spa experience can be tailor-made depending on each couple's preferences. Whether it is a cleansing hammam, soothing massage or replenishing body wrap, it will leave guests feeling refreshed, renewed and reconnected.

As the sun sets over the mountain, loved ones can spend quality time together whilst taking in the views from the privacy of their balcony before savouring exquisite cuisine in one of the hotel's iconic settings. On February 14, couples will be treated to a Grand Valentine's Buffet at Al Maisan complete with a welcome drink upon arrival, a choice of cuisines from around the globe, and a red rose for ladies. Prices start at Dhs2,865++ per room for two nights.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call +968 25218000 or e-mail reservations.aaja@anantara.com.

Where?

AL MAHA, A LUXURY COLLECTION DESERT RESORT & SPA, DUBAI DESERT CONSERVATION RESERVE, UAE

What's on offer?

This Valentine's Day, Al Maha, A Luxury Collection, Desert Resort & Spa, is inviting guests to embrace their inner romantic with a special overnight package. Termed as one of the world's most luxurious 'glamping' sites, Al Maha enjoys a unique location in the heart of the Dubai Desert Conservation Reserve. This month, take time away from busy city life and step into the mystical Dubai sand dunes to your very own Bedouin-style luxury suite.

Al Maha is offering the 'Love Retreat' package which begins with breakfast, followed by a relaxed lunch. The afternoon can be spent with a luxurious couple's spa experience, after which guests can opt for any two desert based activities, ranging from wildlife drives, nature walks, camel trekking, archery or simply a mesmerizing sundowner in the golden horizon over a bottle of bubbly and chocolate-covered strawberries. The special day comes to an end with a 7-course gourmet dining experience served at the guests' preferred dining option, be it at Al Diwaan restaurant or in the privacy of their luxury suite's pool terrace under starlit skies.

The Love Retreat Package is priced at Dhs4,999 +++ on weekdays and Dhs5,999+++ on weekends, and is valid from February 1 to 28.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call 04-8329900 or visit al-maha.com.



Where?

PARK HYATT, ABU DHABI, UAE

What's on offer?

This resort is where to go for a perfect weekend escape (or week-long, if you have the time). It's a blissful resort for both couples and families (if you're looking to

take the kids along), catering to the needs of all. The resort has six different food and beverage outlets, all serving up a variety of international cuisines and carefully crafted drinks. The Beach House & Rooftop is relaxing, romantic and serves up deliciously fresh Mediterranean cuisine. The menu features a fantastic range of fish and seafood options predominantly, but there's also meat and vegetarian dishes. When it comes to relaxation, you'll find yourself faced with a tough decision when choosing where to lounge for the day. From the long stretch of natural white sand and blue waters, to a selection of spots around the pool or perfectly manicured gardens, you'll not be without a place to put your feet up and chill.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a reservation, call +971-24071234 or visit abudhabi.park.hyatt.com.



**Where?****FAIRMONT DUBAI, UAE****What's on offer?**

Celebrate love this Valentine's Day in the heart of the city. Fairmont Dubai adds a dash of glitz and glamour to the romance season and offers couples a variety of stylish settings to celebrate. This package is for those looking to really splurge – coming in as one of Dubai's most expensive Valentine's experiences.

The two-day romantic staycation will start with a stretch limo pick-up from home to the hotel, followed by a helicopter ride over Dubai. You'll then be taken back to the hotel and given the keys to the hotel's 548 sq. m two-story Imperial Suite, where a private butler awaits your arrival with a bouquet of 100 red roses and a diamond jewelry set worth over Dhs15,000. You will then head to the hotel's salon, where professional make-up artists and hair stylists help you and your better half get ready.

For dinner, you'll be treated to a 7-course gourmet menu with beverage pairings, created by the personal chef, served on the hotel's rooftop and accompanied by a live violinist to serenade you for the evening.

On the next morning, before taking a dip in your own private jacuzzi, you will be treated to a romantic bubbly breakfast in bed. Later on in the day, you'll be chauffeured to take a 40-minute flight over Dubai's skyline on board a seaplane, followed by a 90-minute couples' massage in the comfort of your suite. You'll spend an afternoon on a private yacht with a bottle of bubbly and strawberries dipped in chocolate, followed by a dinner at The Exchange Grill in the evening. Before you're chauffeured back home with the stretch

limousine the day after, another sumptuous breakfast buffet will be laid out for you and your better half on the Imperial Suite's terrace.

This Valentine's package is available for a stay from February 14 and is priced at Dhs85,000 per couple.

Get in touch: For more information of the make a booking (bookings have to be made prior to February via phone), call 04-3325555 or e-mail dubai@fairmont.com.

**Where?****HILTON AL HAMRA BEACH & GOLF RESORT, NORTH RAS AL KHAIMAH, UAE****What's on offer?**

This RAK-based resort is offering overnight stays at a very affordable price. The Valentine's package is inclusive of a one-night stay, complete with breakfast and three spa treatments per person (yes, three!), plus a 2-for-1 dining voucher to spend at Meat & Fish Friday beach brunch, complete with unlimited fish and meat from the grill, bubbles and cocktails from 12pm to 4.30pm. There's seven dining offers to choose from at the hotel, including the friendly beachfront restaurant, Le Chalet, and authentic Lebanese restaurant, Al Jazeera. Sample innovative dishes prepared with only the freshest ingredients, or simply sit back with a cup of local tea or Turkish coffee in the Lobby Lounge.

The Valentine's package is priced at Dhs1,195 and is available throughout February.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a booking, call 07-2446666 or e-mail reservations.hamra@hilton.com.

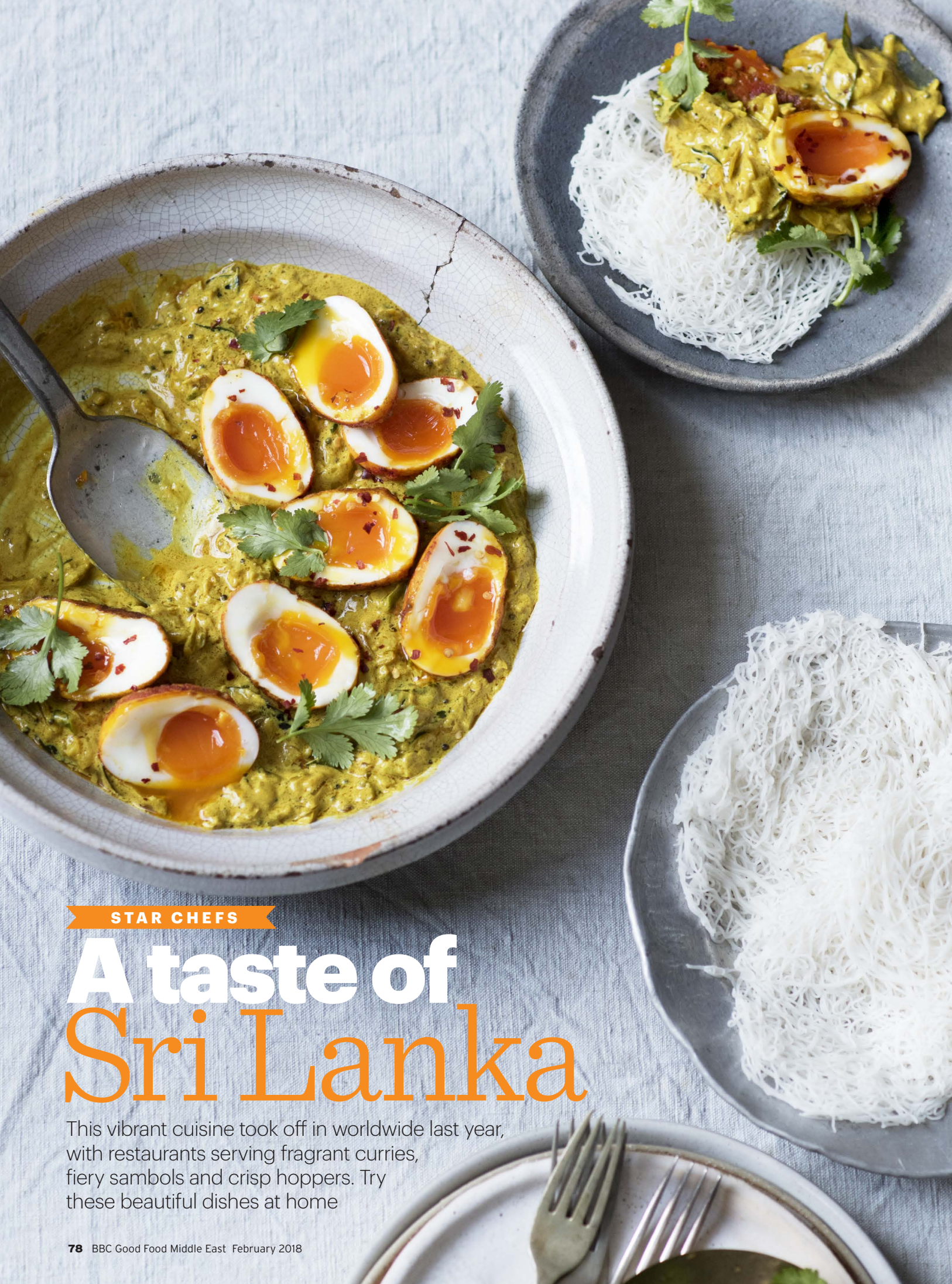
Where?**THE RITZ-CARLTON RAS AL KHAIMAH, AL WADI DESERT, UAE****What's on offer?**

Glowing beneath the Arabian sun by day and a blanket of stars at night, the beauty of The Ritz-Carlton Ras Al Khaimah, Al Wadi Desert has long captivated the hearts of local Bedouins and desert explores alike. Today, its breathtaking beauty is the setting for this luxury resort, where both tradition and adventure are celebrated with 5-star amenities including Bedouin-inspired luxury villas, each with a private pool, and carefully crafted culinary experiences including an all-day dining restaurant, a rooftop bar and dinner on the dunes. There's also a Spa with treatments incorporating locally sourced herbs and spices and hydrotherapy facilities combining European and Asian philosophies, plus an array of outdoor activities including archery, nature walks, biking, bird-watching, camel rides and stargazing to keep you busy.

For Valentine's, the resort's Desert Romance (available throughout February) package offers couples an overnight stay in a tented pool villa with romantic set-up, breakfast for two at Kaheela, plus a 30-minute head and shoulder massage per person, per stay. Priced at Dhs2,550 for two, plus tax.

Get in touch: For more information or to make a reservation, call +971 7206 7777 or visit ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/uae/al-wadi-desert.





STAR CHEFS

A taste of Sri Lanka

This vibrant cuisine took off in worldwide last year, with restaurants serving fragrant curries, fiery sambols and crisp hoppers. Try these beautiful dishes at home



Chef Emily Dobbs has run Sri Lankan hoppers street food stall, Weligama, in London since 2015. She now cooks at various supper clubs – see weligama.co.uk.
 @weligama_ldn

In the late 1980s, my uncle went on holiday to Sri Lanka, and never came back. He lives on Taprobane Island – a strip of jungle perched on rocks with an old white house – off Weligama Bay. My family and I first went to visit him 15 years ago when Sri Lanka was in the midst of civil war. We seemed to be the only tourists and you weren't allowed to travel north of Colombo. I remember that smack of hot, humid air with the strong, musty scent of the tropics when I first stepped off the plane. I still look forward to that moment when I visit now. I instantly feel at home in Sri Lanka.'

Egg curry

Frying the eggs gives a tofu-like exterior. Serve these with fresh spring hoppers as I have, or rice.

SERVES 4 PREP 30 mins COOK 20 mins EASY

8 medium free-range eggs	1 large garlic clove, peeled and finely chopped
3 tsp turmeric	1 tsp chilli powder
3 tbsp vegetable oil	1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp black mustard seeds	1 cinnamon stick
1 tsp cumin seeds	4 anchovies, chopped
handful of curry leaves	200ml coconut milk
1 onion, finely chopped	whole nutmeg, grated
2 small green chillies, finely chopped	string hoppers or cooked rice, to serve

1 Boil the eggs for 5 mins, then carefully remove from the water with a slotted spoon and plunge into cold water. Once cool enough to handle, carefully peel. Pat dry, prick with a fork and roll in 2 tsp of the turmeric.

2 Heat 2 tbsp of the oil in a frying pan and fry the eggs in batches a couple of mins at a time, turning over with a spoon until the outside has formed a crispy exterior and they are lightly golden all over. Lift out with a slotted spoon and set aside.

3 In a small pan, heat the remaining oil until just smoking, then add the mustard seeds swiftly followed by the cumin seeds and curry leaves. Add the onion, green chillies, garlic and 1 tsp sea salt. Fry for a couple of mins, then add the chilli powder, remaining turmeric, curry powder, cinnamon and anchovies. Add the coconut milk with 100ml water and simmer for 5 mins until the sauce has reduced. Season to taste.

4 Slice the eggs in half, or keep whole if you prefer, and season each with a little salt and black pepper, then add to the sauce. Simmer for a couple of mins, then finish with a little grated nutmeg before removing from the pan and serving with the string hoppers, or rice.

GOOD TO KNOW iron

PER SERVING 341 kcs • fat 28g • saturates 11g • carbs 5g • sugars 3g • fibre 2g • protein 17g • salt 2.1g



Mussels, lime & chilli butter in arrack

Buy your mussels live and shut tight from your local fishmonger. Store before use in a cool, damp place. This way you can clean them, by removing the barnacles and beards, in a self-contained, no-mess cool box.

SERVES 4 PREP 20 mins COOK 10 mins EASY

1kg mussels	250ml arrack or spiced rum
2 tbsp coconut oil	1 tbsp kithul treacle or maple syrup
2 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced	½ tsp turmeric
1 large shallot, peeled and thinly sliced	1 tbsp butter mixed with ½ tsp chili flakes
1 small pack coriander, stalks only, finely chopped	1 lime, juiced
handful of curry leaves	pinch of sea salt
	handful of coriander leaves
	roti, to serve

1 Rinse the mussels under cold water, removing the beards by pulling them sharply towards you. Discard the shells that don't close when tapped with a knife.

2 Heat the coconut oil in a large pan (with a lid). Once hot, add the garlic, shallot, coriander stalks and curry leaves, and sizzle for a couple of mins. Add the mussels, give the pan a good shake and cook for 1 min. Add the arrack, treacle and turmeric, then immediately cover the pan with a lid and let it steam.

3 Cook for 5 mins, giving the pan a good shake. Check the mussels have opened and add the chilli butter, lime juice and salt and shake the pan. Finish with the chopped coriander. Discard any shells that haven't opened. Serve the mussels with roti.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free

PER SERVING 309 kcs • fat 10g • saturates 7g • carbs 4g • sugars 3g • fibre 1g • protein 13g • salt 0.9g



Dhal

Dhal is a very popular breakfast dish in Sri Lanka – a bit like having a bowl of porridge. Tempering (heating spices in oil), gives a flavour booster at the end. Pandan leaves, or rampe, give off a warm citrus perfume and are used in sweet and savoury dishes.

Serves 4-6 PREP 10 mins COOK 30 mins EASY V

350g red split lentils	2 tsp sea salt
2 green chillies	175g spinach, washed
5cm pandan (optional)	1 tsp chilli powder
½ whole bulb garlic, cut horizontally with skin on	For the temper
1 tsp turmeric	1 tbsp coconut oil
1 cinnamon stick, broken in half	1 tsp mustard seeds
1 shallot, peeled	handful of curry leaves
400ml coconut milk	To serve (optional)
	rotis, yogurt and crispy onions

1 Soak the lentils in cold water while you get together the rest of your ingredients.

2 Drain the lentils and transfer to a large pan with 800ml water, the whole green chillies, pandan, garlic, turmeric, cinnamon and shallot. Turn on the heat and, once boiling, simmer over a low heat, uncovered, for 10 mins. Add the coconut milk and cook for 15 mins or until the lentils are soft, then add the salt (you add it at the end as doing so beforehand prevents the lentils from cooking).

3 Once the lentils are cooked, turn off the heat and fish out the pandan, garlic and shallot with tongs and discard. Add the spinach and chilli powder to the lentils.

4 To make the temper, heat the oil in a small pan. Once it starts to smoke add the mustard seeds, quickly followed by the curry leaves. Pour into the dhal and serve with toppings and sides of your choice.

GOOD TO KNOW vegan • fibre • iron • 1 of 5-a-day • gluten free

PER SERVING (6) 341 kcal • fat 14g • saturates 11g • carbs 34g • sugars 3g • fibre 5g protein 16g • salt 1.8g

Cinnamon meringue, roast bananas & saffron cream

A Sri Lankan-style pavlova. The meringue gives texture rather than sweetness as it is slightly salty, tastes like cinnamon toast and melts on your tongue.

SERVES 12 **PREP** 25 mins **COOK** 2 hrs 30 mins

MORE EFFORT **V**

For the cinnamon meringues

5 egg whites
1 tsp sea salt
150g caster sugar
130g dark brown soft sugar or jaggery
1 tsp ground cinnamon
For the saffron cream
250ml double cream
200ml coconut cream
50g icing sugar
1 lime, zested

1 tsp turmeric
pinch of saffron strands
For the roast bananas
1½ tbsp brown sugar
1 tsp sea salt
1½ tbsp coconut oil, heated and cooled
6 medium bananas, peeled
gold leaf (optional if you want to pimp it up), to serve

1 First, make the meringue. Heat oven to 150C/130C fan/gas 2. Whisk the egg whites and salt to form soft peaks. Whisk in the sugars and cinnamon gradually, a spoonful at a time, and continue whisking until stiff glossy peaks are formed. Spread the meringue mixture evenly onto a greased and lined baking tray and cook for about 2 hrs 10 mins or until the meringue is beginning to darken and crisp. Remove and check the undersides are hard to the touch. If not, then continue cooking for another 5-10 mins.

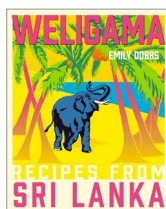
2 Meanwhile, make the saffron cream. Whip the double cream and coconut cream into soft peaks. Sift in the icing sugar and combine with the lime zest, turmeric and saffron strands. Set aside in the fridge.

3 For the roast bananas, line a baking tray with baking parchment and spread the brown sugar, salt and coconut oil evenly across it. Cut the bananas into long, thin, diagonal strips and place on the lined tray. This can sit while you wait for your meringue to finish.

4 Once your meringue is ready, turn up the heat to 230C/210C fan/gas 8 and roast the bananas for 20 mins until caramelised. Leave to cool completely. To serve, layer the meringue with the saffron cream and roast bananas, then sprinkle over a bit of gold leaf, if you like.

GOOD TO KNOW gluten free

PER SERVING 342 kcal • fat 18g • saturates 13g • carbs 40g • sugars 39g • fibre 1g • protein 3g • salt 0.9g



Recipes adapted from *Weligama* by Emily Dobbs (Dhs130, Seven Dials). Photographs © Issy Croker

Competition



WIN!

**A 1-night stay for
2 at Hili Rayhaan
by Rotana, worth
Dhs5,000!**

Win a one-night stay at Hili Rayhaan by Rotana in a premium suite inclusive of breakfast and dinner for two people!

Hili Rayhaan by Rotana is the first hotel under the Rayhaan brand to open in Al Ain the garden city of the UAE, reflecting the essence of Arabic traditions. Conveniently located at Hili District, the heritage destination of the UAE, a stone throw away from Oman, Al Ain airport and an hour drive time from Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Hili Rayhaan by Rotana offers 254 state of the art spacious rooms and suites in an alcohol free environment, a choice of 3 culinary offerings, Elements, an all-day restaurant offering international buffet for breakfast, lunch and dinner; Hili Majlis, a lobby lounge for informal get-togethers over coffee and light snacks and

Sundeck Pool Café, the attractive pool café which serves fresh juices and light snacks, Bodylines Leisure & Fitness Club with aerobic room, outdoor tennis court, outdoor swimming pool, children's playground and children's pool, steam, sauna and massage rooms. Meeting and conference facilities are an additional benefit the hotel can offer both guests and the local community.

Directly linked to Hili Rayhaan by Rotana, Hili Mall the newest shopping destination in the city with its iconic design combining heritage with modernity, lodges a wide variety of brands under its roof, which will surely add more zest to your stay.

The prize draw for a one-night stay at Hili Rayhaan by Rotana will be made at the end of February 2018. Prize certificate cannot be exchanged for cash, is not transferable, is not for resale. Booking in advance is required and subject to availability. T&C apply.

**SCAN THIS QR CODE
TO GO STRAIGHT TO
OUR WEBSITE.**



Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com

to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

How many rooms does Hili Rayhaan by Rotana have?

*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

WIN!

A 3-night stay for 2 at LUX* Grand Gaube, Mauritius, worth Dhs5,000!

Win a three-night stay in Mauritius at LUX* Grand Gaube for two people, including breakfast.

With innovation at its core, LUX* Hotels and Resorts recently unveiled a reimagined resort in Mauritius unlike anything else on the island. A pioneering vision from internationally renowned designer Kelly Hoppen, LUX* Grand Gaube delivers Hoppen's signature timeless elegance with delicious retro-chic residential beach house comfort on one of the Indian Ocean's most stunning locations. From generously stylish rooms with balconies or terraces to showstopper villas with private pools and gardens - all come complete with Indian Ocean vistas and legendary LUX* hospitality.

Set amongst lush tropical gardens, LUX* Grand Gaube offers undulating coves, the calmest of lagoons, two tranquil beaches and three spectacular swimming pools. Also boasting six restaurants and

seven bars, guests can tuck into global flavours at the Palm Court, Peruvian and Argentinian cuisine at INTI, authentic Creole flavours at Banyan and a Turkish twist at Bodrum Blue - plus Café LUX*, a French Kiss Bar, The G&T 100 Club and the resort's international beach club concept, Beach Rouge.

A true destination resort, expect to be spoiled with an abundance of places to relax or refuel: from an extensive sports and wellness facility featuring a sensational new LUX* Me spa, fitness and tennis academy, to nearby golf course and world-class water sports programme. To further tempt guests from their sun loungers, LUX* Grand Gaube also offers inspirational classes, expert-led workshops and plenty of surprises around every corner.

The prize draw for a three-night stay in Mauritius at LUX* Grand Gaube will be made at the end of February 2018. Prize certificate cannot be exchanged for cash, is not transferable, is not for resale. Booking in advance is required and subject to availability. Transportation to Mauritius is not included.

Log on to bbcgoodfoodme.com

to enter this competition and simply answer this question:

How many bars and restaurants does LUX* Grand Gaube have?

**SCAN THIS QR CODE
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OUR WEBSITE.**



*Terms & conditions apply. Flights are not included in this prize. Employees of CPI Media Group are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

COMPETITIONS

Fabulous prizes, from dining vouchers to gourmet goodies, up for grabs.



Ain Resort is located in Al Ain, 'the famous garden city of the Gulf', a haven of peace and tranquillity and renowned for its abundant greenery and spectacular mountain range.

WIN!

A 1-NIGHT WEEKEND STAY AT DANAT AL AIN RESORT FOR 2 WITH BREAKFAST IN ARABESQUE! WORTH DHS1,000

Thanks to Danat Al Ain Resort you could be in with the chance of winning a one-night stay for two including buffet breakfast in Arabesque restaurant. Danat Al



WIN!

AZALYA FRIDAY BRUNCH FOR 2 AT MELIA DUBAI! WORTH DHS598

The Azalya Friday Brunch at Melia Dubai is a delicious spread of cuisines from around the world. Tantalise your taste buds with a sumptuous feast all year round offering a package with both alcoholic and non-alcoholic.



WIN!

A SEAFOOD NIGHT FOR 4 AT MERCURE DUBAI BARSHA HEIGHTS HOTEL SUITES & APARTMENTS! WORTH DHS560

The Seafood Night at Mercure Dubai Barsha Heights Hotel Suites & Apartments 'Day & Night Restaurant' has a huge choice on offer each Friday including fresh

catches straight from the ocean such as lobster, oysters and shrimps, expertly prepared by Head Chef Imran and his team. The winner can enjoy the prize at the weekly theme night any Friday from 6pm onwards with family and friends.



WIN!

BRUNCH FOR 2 AT MCGETTIGAN'S, INCLUSIVE OF BEVERAGES! WORTH DHS500

You could be in with the chance of winning a Friday brunch for two at McGettigan's! Enjoy unlimited food and drinks from 12noon till 4pm every Friday at McGettigan's Al Ain with Live DJ music.



WIN!

A BRUNCH VOUCHER TO SPEND AT BERTIN BISTRO AND RESTAURANT! WORTH DHS500

Bertin Bistro and Restaurant's is an Alsatian bistro you can call home – it's the perfect place to enjoy a cup of coffee and freshly baked goodies.

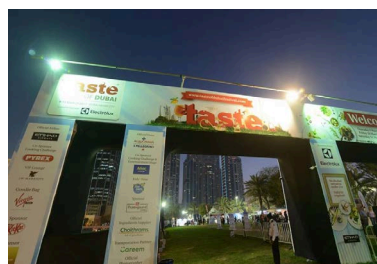
Enter this competition to be in with a chance of winning Dhs500 to spend at Bertin Bistro and Restaurant's 'A la Carte Brunch'.



WIN!

AN ONLINE SHOPPING VOUCHER TO SPEND AT KOITA! WORTH DHS500

Koita is giving one lucky winner Dhs500 worth of delicious milk, which is made from very happy cows in Italy! Why not try Koita's new Soy Milk, Organic Skim or Lactose-free Milk which hit the shelves very recently.



WIN!

A SET OF 4 TICKETS TO TASTE OF DUBAI 2018 FOR YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS! THERE WILL BE 5 WINNERS!

Taste of Dubai 2018 celebrated its 11th year and is the city's favourite food, drink

and music festival. The festival is a 3-day food extravaganza, with the city's hottest restaurants, world class celebrity chefs, and an incredible line-up of international music. For all those food lovers you can come and watch live cooking demonstrations or get hands on and cook along with top chefs as well as learn some culinary top tips. Alternatively, you can sit back, relax and soak up the sounds listening to live entertainment or enjoy shopping for unique gifts and culinary products in the outdoor shopping area. The festival will take place on March 8 – 11, 2018.



To be in with a chance of winning these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website, and answer the simple questions.

*Terms & conditions apply. Employees of CPI Media Group and entrants below 21 years old are not eligible to enter. Winners will be selected on random basis from correct entries.

A romantic couple is seated at a table in a private beach gazebo at night. The woman, with dark curly hair and wearing a teal strapless top, is smiling and looking at the man. The man, with short dark hair and a beard, is wearing a white dress shirt and is also smiling, looking at the woman. They are holding hands. The table is set with white plates, silverware, and a large, ornate silver platter of food. A red candle in a glass holder is lit on the table. In the background, the city skyline of Dubai is visible, with the Palm Jumeirah and its iconic towers illuminated at night. The overall atmosphere is romantic and intimate.

RIXOS

THE PALM DUBAI

This Valentine's spoil your significant other with an intimate moonlit dinner in a private beach gazebo adorned with colours of love and panoramic views of the iconic Palm Jumeirah. Savour the taste of a delectable fusion of aromatic dishes paired with a bottle of bubbly and free-flowing house beverages served up by your private butler. What's more, every couple receives a flower bouquet on arrival and a specially baked heart-shaped cake for a sweet ending to the night.

AED 3,999 per couple
AED 2,999 per couple for non-alcoholic beverages

For bookings, contact 04 457 5454 or dine.dubai@rixos.com
Advance booking required.



BOAT-TO-TABLE

STYLE & DINE THE FRESHEST CATCH



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